EARTHDAWN THIRD EDITION
PLAYER'S
COMPANION
EARTHDAWN

• THIRD EDITION •

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CREDITS

• EARTHDAWN THIRD EDITION •

PLAYER'S COMPANION

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There are many ways to categorize the world. Categorically, for the logical. Numerically, for those who prefer numbers over the written letter. Alphabetically, for the ease of all. I prefer a mixture of the three. Call it contextual or logical if you must assign a label. All have a place in the Great Library.

• Merrox, Master of the Hall of records •

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

What is truth? You think I deceive you with illusions to confound and aggravate you?

No. I am simply teaching you how to cut to the truth of things. Nothing more, nothing less.

• Alachrim, Human Illusionist •

The age of **Earthdawn** is an era of magic that existed thousands of years ago in our world's dim past. Magic touched every aspect of the lives of men and women of the Namegiver races: humans, elves, dwarfs, orks, trolls, windlings, t'skrang, and obsidimen. However, as the levels of magic rose, so did the dangers in the world. The rise of magic brought the Horrors to Earth, creatures from the depths of astral space that devoured all life in their path. For four centuries, the people of Barsaive hid underground as the Horrors devastated their lands during the dark time that came to be called the Scourge.

Now, the people of Barsaive have emerged from their sealed kaers and citadels, ready to fight for life and freedom against the remaining Horrors and the oppressive Theran Empire. From all across Barsaive, bold heroes step forward to champion their land, arming themselves for their daunting task with powerful magical spells and treasures. Through magic, skill, and daring, Barsaive's heroes strive to heal the world of the scars left by the Scourge. By doing so, they become Barsaive's living legends.

The ***Player's Companion*** expands the rules in the ***Player's Guide***, taking player characters from Ninth to Fifteenth Circle in their Disciplines.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The first part of this book offers additional and optional rules for each of the **Disciplines**, including a fast system for creating experienced characters. The individuacl chapters on each Discipline appear as excerpts from the Great Library of Throal; a collection of essays written or dictated by adepts of each of the fifteen Disciplines most commonly practiced in Barsaive. In each chapter, the author describes how he perceives his Discipline: its meaning, its demands, its symbols and rituals, and so on. Because we recognize that this book offers only one point of view for each Discipline, we encourage players and gamemasters to use these passages and interpret them according to their own visions and insights. Of course, the Master of the Hall of Records and the staff of the Great Library have also added comments where appropriate.

The second part of this book offers new **Talents** and **Spells**, all of them designed for Warden and Master adepts. It also contains a chapter on **Talent Knacks**: specializations that enable adepts to use their talents to create specific effects. By widening the scope of what talents allow characters to do, knacks flesh out the types of actions adepts can perform when using their talents, and create greater opportunity to make each character unique.

In the third part of the book, the **Enchanting** chapter provides background and rules for transforming mundane objects into magical items, from humble cook pots to the most legendary enchanted blades. And last but not least, the **Passions & Questors** chapter details the spiritual beliefs and customs of Barsaive's people. The Passions are living embodiments of the life force of the universe, giving shape and form to the collective emotions and ideals of the Namegivers in Barsaive and across the world, serving as intermediaries between these common folk and the awesome power of the universe. Questors pledge themselves to one Passion and are bestowed with special powers in return for their devotion.

The ***Player's Companion*** concludes with an **Appendix** and an **Index** for easy reference.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ADEPT'S WAY

Not only does a Discipline affect the way you use magic—it also influences everything you do, from the trivialities of daily life to the deepest aspects of your spirit.

• Krolok, Ork Nethermancer •

The account of the magic of the Disciplines and the rules for the individual Disciplines as presented in the ***Player's Guide*** are not the end of what you can achieve and make use of for your character's Discipline, both in respects to roleplaying as well as character creation and development, in the **Earthdawn** game. The following chapters, each dedicated to one of the fifteen major Disciplines known in Barsaive, contain fictional accounts written from the perspectives of actual followers of those Disciplines, which players can use as inspiration when developing their characters. Each chapter also contains game information for Ninth through Fifteenth Circle of a Discipline, and additional rules and character options for your game of **Earthdawn**. These rules and character options are introduced in this chapter on a general level. Some of them are optional rules, some are guidelines for how to implement the rules in the individual Discipline chapters, and some are additions that are usually only required for play in higher Circles.

PERSONAL VISIONS

Adepts wield power by finding a connection between their own personalities and experiences on one hand, and the great traditions of their Disciplines on the other. No two adepts relate to a Discipline in exactly the same way; a character cannot become an adept simply by following someone else's view of the world. The adept must bring something of himself to a Discipline, and build something new instead of simply copying the patterns of the past.

The firsthand accounts of the various Disciplines presented in the following chapters are, in a sense, elaborate personal visions. The narrators of these passages are biased in favor of their own ways of doing things, and though they often touch on the more common ways of following particular Disciplines, they are not laying down hard and fast rules that player characters of those Disciplines must follow.

When creating a character, you should give some thought to your character's personal vision of his Discipline. You should think about the character's general creed, and perhaps a few examples of actions the character regards as taboo. A personal vision can lend depth and focus to characters, providing a foundation for future roleplaying. This statement of the character's viewpoint may be anything from a few brief sentences to a detailed essay.

Somok Nightsails believes that the way of the Sky Raider is to take without apology and to avoid backing down at all costs. He never shows regret for his actions, and hates to retreat from even the direst peril. He does not plunder by stealth because he considers sneaking to be the coward's way; he believes the brute frontal attack serves as the hallmark of a true Sky Raider.

The gamemaster should work with his players to develop this important aspect of their characters. As long as the personal vision makes some kind of sense, the gamemaster should allow it. A Beastmaster who hates animals or a Swordmaster who hates drawing attention to himself is almost certainly unsuitable, but Barsaive is home to many strange things. Somewhere there may be Warriors without a sense of honor or Nethermancers who are afraid of the dark.

If you don't like one of the visions presented in this book, the essays often provide other examples of suitable paths, and the sample dialogues that appear with the archetype characters found in the ***Player's Guide*** offer further choices on which to base characters' personal visions. If a gamemaster and players wish to use the optional **Talent Crises** rule, p. 8, each character must have some kind of personal vision for his Discipline.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Some Disciplines offer special features associated with their chosen paths. A special feature can be anything ranging from bonuses under certain circumstances to special tie-ins of other aspects of magic into the Discipline to elaborate extensions of a Discipline's calling expressed as a rule. For example, Swordmasters follow special rules of Bragging Rights after they have won a tournament, their newly acclaimed prestige enabling them to act from a position of authority and confidence in social situations. Weaponsmiths follow their path to perfection by attempting to forge their Heartblades, weapons that are the ultimate expression of their expertise at, and dedication to, the crafting of weaponry.

Not all Disciplines have special feature rules. You can expand Disciplines that do not have special features if this fits your style of play, but these rules are not required. Similarly, players are not required to use the feature rules presented in this book. They are an opportunity, not a restriction.

SPECIALISTS

Some Disciplines introduce specialists in their fictional accounts, and present rules on how to alter the original Disciplines to better play such specialists. A specialist is usually a character following a narrowed-down version of the Discipline, or a variant that strays slightly from the path of the Discipline, to walk in a parallel direction. For example, the Troubadour Discipline has a Sage specialist; this version of the Troubadour is more concerned with accurate accounts of historic events than how good a story these events make—stories that normal Troubadours often spice up to be more entertaining, or that they dramatize to show a stronger moral. An example of another nature is that of elemental specialists, Elementalists that focus on one of the elements, gaining greater proficiency when interacting with that element, but being less adept at handling the other four. Specialists are considered to form a minority of adepts following a particular Discipline's path; if a specialist variant is used, it does not by default completely replace the entire Discipline in your game (although you are free to make this change if you alter your game's tone from what is presented in official **Earthdawn** products).

Specialist Disciplines are available to players at the gamemaster's discretion and usually come with changes to the Discipline's talents or other abilities. Most often, a specialist exchanges a couple of talents between Talent Options and Discipline Talents. Sometimes, he might receive different Defense bonuses, Half-magic abilities, or Discipline Abilities. There is no rule or limit as to how a specialist can differ from adepts following his parent Discipline, but his view of the world still follows the same general direction, and as a result his magical abilities are largely the same. Specialists are sometimes addressed by other Names, which are considered more specific expressions of the Names of the parent Disciplines. For example, the Swordmaster Discipline knows Bladesmen and Gallants as true specialists, and Swordmasters call themselves by other Names to express their focus on weapons other than the sword. But if one of these Names is uttered in the presence of another Swordmaster or a scholar versed in the theory of Disciplines, the parent Discipline will be recognized.

As specialists follow a slightly different mindset and can learn other Discipline Talents than normal adepts of the same Discipline, they are slightly more restricted when advancing in Circles. To be a specialist, the adept must be initiated into the Discipline's First Circle by another follower of the specialization, and must train with a specialist tutor whenever advancing to a Circle where his Discipline Talent or a Discipline Ability is different from that of the parent Discipline.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

In addition to the introductory fictional account, each Discipline is provided with a few short roleplaying hints in a non-fictional manner. These hints can present variations from or explanations of the fictional account, but usually detail aspects of the Discipline that are not easily expressed from the perspective of a living adept. These roleplaying hints are only a start for players to develop their characters, and are no more binding than the fictional reports. These roleplaying hints also demonstrate the way an average representative of the Discipline is played. Gamemasters can use them when creating gamemaster characters, while players can use them as a base of knowledge of typical colleagues of their characters, and a starting point for the process of creating unique and individual followers of their characters' Disciplines. **Earthdawn** is a game of heroes and legends, and player characters are not limited to representing the norm, but are supposed to stand out from it.

ON MINOR, OR HALF-MAGIC, ADEPTS

Of this topic, I admittedly know little, but I will share what knowledge I possess. The so-called minor, or half-magic, adepts are those people who tap into the magic of the world to perform such everyday tasks as bargaining, navigation, farming, healing, and others. Minor adepts exist in many of Barsaive's villages and towns and often play important roles in village life.

Though similar to true magical talents, half-magic is a different thing. For reasons no one I know can explain, no minor adept can follow a Discipline, though a full adept may learn those half-magic abilities that fit his Discipline. I believe that the mental and emotional intensity and determination required of a full adept simply lie beyond the abilities of a minor adept. While half-magic is learned slowly over time, increasing as an adept advances in Circle, a full adept relies on the flashes of insight that come with learning a Discipline.

A full adept may learn certain half-magic abilities, but he cannot practice his own Discipline and also learn the full range of abilities available to a minor adept—he cannot be both a full and minor adept. I know this to be true from discussions with other adepts, and from experience. As a young boy, before I began to follow the path of the Troubadour, I studied farming magic so that I might one day take my father's place in my village. When I began my Troubadour's training in earnest, I found I had lost all skill and facility in farming. That magic had left me. In its place were the roots of my talents in the Adept's Way. I have never looked back with regret.

▲ ▲ ▲

Ilkith's view of the Adept's Way, though learned from experience, is still only one person's view. The careful reader should think on Ilkith's words, not merely accept them as established fact.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS

A section on Discipline violations represents another layer of roleplaying hints, with a focus on what a typical representative of a Discipline refrains from doing. Discipline violations are used for the **Talent Crises** optional rule (p. 8), and with respect to it are supposed to be failures that, when committed, are as personal as the individual goals an adept strives toward.

▲ ▲ ▲

Of profound interest to many adepts is the phenomenon of the talent crisis, a state where an adept, through betrayal of his own ideals regarding his Discipline's tradition and training, finds it difficult to perform his Discipline's magic. The sensation is a personal one, unique to the individual and Discipline. An account as close to the truth as possible is transcribed by Ilkith Fandor, Troubadour and Weaponsmith, who, as a follower of two Disciplines, has an insight into the conflicts that may tear at an adept's sense of place in the world.

—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of the City of Ystane, 1507 TH

TALENT CRISES

Optional Rule: Because an adept's power depends upon him acting in accordance with his mystical world view, mentally straying too far from that world view causes the adept to lose control of his talents. This phenomenon, known as a **talent crisis**, usually occurs when an adept knowingly and freely behaves in a manner contrary to his personal vision of his Discipline. In the wake of such actions, adepts often feel that their talents are slipping away. Sometimes they simply feel as if they have lost their edge; on occasion, any attempt to use their talents fails outright. Gamemasters using the talent crisis rule should make sure that characters' personal visions include prohibitions that will make a difference in play. Keep in mind that a personal vision is an adept's core belief, not just a list of minor habits. A Warrior who vows never to harm a helpless foe is taking on a real restriction; a Wizard who has sworn never to eat carrots is obviously the creation of a player seeking to avoid any serious limitations.

TALENT CRISIS TABLE

Severity	Talent Penalty	Crisis Duration
Trivial	None	NA
Mild	–1	10 rounds
Serious	–2	1 hour
Severe	–3	1 day
Heinous	–4	Until the adept accomplishes a Deed of Atonement

When the gamemaster feels that a player character has violated his personal vision or the basic tenets of his Discipline, the gamemaster may apply a penalty to all Talent Tests associated with the Discipline in question. The gamemaster must determine the severity of the violation, and should tell the player that the penalty is in force. Adepts always recognize a talent crisis. A talent crisis does not begin immediately after the violation, but manifests the next time the character tries to use a talent of the violated Discipline. However, because adepts instinctively know when they have violated their personal visions, they immediately become anxious, feel guilty, suffer slight nausea, and so on. If players do not acknowledge that their characters have violated their personal visions, the gamemaster should take the initiative and state that the characters are experiencing feelings of this kind.

The duration and penalty of the talent crisis is dependent upon the severity of the violation. If the gamemaster wishes, he may randomly add or subtract time from the duration of a talent crisis to keep such an event unpredictable. Use the Talent Crisis Table as a guideline.

The intent of the Talent Crises optional rule is to add depth to the world of Earthdawn, not to serve as a mechanism for gamemasters to impose their own idea of how to roleplay on players.

In keeping with the spirit of the rule, gamemasters should not penalize player characters for Trivial violations such as making a statement contrary to the character's personal vision. Also, if a character has little or no choice but to violate his or her vision, the gamemaster should reduce the penalty accordingly.

Somok Nightsails mumbles an apology to someone he bumps into on the street, thus committing a Trivial violation of his personal vision. Later, he bumps into a known enemy while wearing a disguise; he again mutters an apology, committing a Mild violation. The memory of the incident rankles for a while, dulling his overall performance. Some days later, he steals something by stealth, seriously violating his personal vision of his Discipline. Nightsails now begins to feel a gnawing sensation of guilt, dulling his performance further.

Months afterward, Nightsails backs down in the face of a challenge from a known enemy. This act is a Severe violation; he has betrayed his beliefs, and finds it hard to concentrate. For a full day, he can hardly function as a Sky Raider. The next day he refuses a challenge from his most despised foe, committing a Heinous violation. This incident comes to dominate his every thought and keeps him from sleeping at night.

Deeds of Atonement

If a character commits a Heinous violation of a personal vision, the resulting talent crisis remains in effect until the adept makes a successful attempt to redeem his or her mistake through a Deed of Atonement. The Deed should involve inconvenience, embarrassment, and risk appropriate to the violation. The player should create an appropriate Deed of Atonement for his character's violation, and the gamemaster must decide if the chosen Deed is sufficient to end the talent crisis.

To make up for backing down from his sworn foe, Somok Nightsails' Deed of Atonement requires him to seek out his enemy and confront him in a fight to the death.

On the Phenomenon of the Talent Crisis

An adept who fails an attempt to use a talent because he has somehow violated his own concept of his Discipline is said to be experiencing a talent crisis. To activate one's magical talents under normal circumstances, one must concentrate fully on one's vision of one's Discipline, creating a moment of intense concentration during which one channels magical energy through one's True Pattern. This energy allows one to perform the great feats that distinguish an adept from ordinary folk. When one experiences doubts about one's unique vision of one's path, one finds it difficult to achieve the state of mind necessary to successfully connect to one's True Pattern. I speak not of a momentary failure of confidence such as any Namegiver may feel, but of profound doubts arising through actions that are clearly at odds with an adept's vision of his Discipline. For example, a Warrior who defines his way as courage in the face of adversity may find it impossible to use his talents after fleeing a battlefield. A Thief who holds selfishness as the hallmark of his Discipline may fail at Thieving after performing an altruistic deed. A talent crisis may strike even when the adept has rationalized a transgression to fit his view of his Discipline, because the heart and spirit, rather than the mind, truly decide the meaning of such actions.

The severity of a talent crisis depends on the degree to which one has parted from one's vision. Most often, the crisis is minor and manifests as a lack of edge in a tight spot. In some extreme cases, however, one may lose all of one's talents until one somehow makes amends for breaking with one's chosen code.

Rituals of Advancement

Initiation into and advancement through the Circles of one's Discipline are important steps in an adept's life. They do not merely represent an increase in an adept's abilities, but the learning of completely new powers, often powers that no mundane Namegiver can ever hope to achieve, and often powers that no other Discipline conveys. As advancement is a hallmark in an adept's life, the event can be tied more closely to the game than through spending of Legend points and paying of training fees between adventures. As an adept advances from one Circle to the next, an elder, one of a higher Circle in that same Discipline, reviews the character's accomplishments in a brief advancement ritual. The elder accepts the adept's performance in that ritual as proof that the adept has achieved a new, higher Circle. The Rituals of Advancement section for each Discipline offers suggestions on how to approach such events, while the actual time and effort they use up at your table is left for players and gamemasters to decide.

As characters start the game as First Circle adepts already, the details on **Recruitment** are often only used to add more color to an adept's background or when an adept takes on an additional Discipline.

Suggestions of advancement rituals for **Novice**, **Journeyman**, and **Warden** adepts are presented thereafter, outlining what type of activity an adept might be asked to perform to prove he is worthy of being part of the new Circle. You can schedule a ritual or test for every Circle to which an adept advances if your game is slow-paced, or only when an adept crosses the threshold of a new Status Level (becoming a Novice when entering Second Circle, a Journeyman when advancing to Fifth Circle, and so on). Likewise, it is left to your group if the ritual is performed as a prerequisite to advance to that Circle, or as a demonstration of new abilities after the adept has joined the ranks of his new peers. Note that rituals for Master Circles are not detailed. Advancement into these Circles is so rare that no traditional rituals have been developed; they are usually personalized for the individual adepts undertaking them. If you would rather spend your valuable time at the table out on adventures, simply ignore this rule. Advancement rituals are not required to play **Earthdawn**; they are just another option for you to incorporate into your game if you so choose.

The **Ghost Master Ritual** is a special ritual available to adepts who know the Ghost Master Ritual talent knack (p. 126). It allows a special form of Circle advancement, in which the adept summons the spirit of an ancient master of his Discipline to tutor his advancement. This method of finding a tutor is sometimes the only way for an adept of very high Circle to advance, given that he may well be the adept with the highest Circle in his Discipline far and wide in any direction. Like Karma Rituals, Ghost Master Rituals are unique to each Discipline, and may be further individualized by the adept according to his personal vision or that of the ghost master. For more information, see p. 10.

Discipline Combinations

Closing each individual Discipline's chapter, overviews of common combinations with other Disciplines discuss how easy or hard it is for an adept to take on another Discipline, or how well typical adepts of any two Disciplines get along. This presentation is usually limited to extreme points of view, neglecting Disciplines that tend to behave or have philosophies neutral to each other. When using the information to determine if a character should take a particular Discipline as a second Discipline, a negative relation between First and desired Second Discipline should not be considered as prohibiting multi-disciplining. Rather, it should be an incentive to develop a unique perspective on how the adept combines the two worldviews.

Circle Advancement Options

The following sections offer additional rules for Circle Advancement beyond those presented in the ***Player's Guide***, allowing for a more involved advancement process at higher Discipline Circles, when trainers begin to grow sparse and more demanding.

The Training Pledge

A character may meet the qualifications to advance to the next Circle but lack the money needed to purchase training. For example, a character who finds himself ready to advance Circles while in the company of a qualified instructor may realize that he just cashed in his latest loot and sent the proceeds off to his family. Unable to pay for training, such a character may decide to take the Training Pledge.

The Training Pledge is a blood magic oath (see **Blood Magic**, on p. 123 of the ***Player's Guide***) that allows a character to request training from an instructor, paying him not with money, but instead with commitment.

The prospective trainee must ask to take the Training Pledge; the instructor may not encourage a character to take the oath. A character cannot ask to take the Training Pledge with an instructor who has shown him hostility, or toward whom he has been hostile. Because the Training Pledge also requires a commitment from the instructor, and because he receives no financial recompense for his time, an instructor can ask a trainee to revoke his request, but must honor the request for the Training Pledge if the trainee persists. The instructor can deny the request only if he has no access to an orichalcum coin; he cannot lie about whether he has a coin or not. If the master does not have an orichalcum coin, he may require the character to obtain one as part of the advancement process.

The character taking the Training Pledge may train with that instructor without payment provided the instructor is of a sufficiently high Circle and the character meets the normal requirements for eligibility to advance to a new Discipline Circle; this counts for both the current Circle being trained and for any future Circle advancements with the same instructor.

The Training Pledge is a blood magic ritual that enchants an orichalcum piece called the Pledge Coin. The instructor and student each let seven drops of their blood fall on the coin, causing each 3 Blood Magic Damage. The two characters meditate together for an hour until the blood dries. The instructor then meditates alone for another hour, until the magic in the coin absorbs the blood. At the end of this time, the instructor gives the Pledge Coin to the trainee as the trainee repeats the following oath:

> *"I shall see the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor sees it. I shall practice the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor practices it. I shall teach the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor taught me."*

Having taken the pledge, the instructor and trainee then begin the standard training process. The Circle at which the trainee takes the pledge (not the one he intends to advance to after having taken the pledge) becomes his Pledge Circle; it is recommended that the player keep track of this Circle and the Discipline by noting it on his character's Character Record Sheet.

A character who trains for and advances to the next Circle of his Discipline by taking the Training Pledge must abide by the following three conditions:

- The character must never ask a trainee to take the Training Pledge from him once he has reached his next Circle. Such a request must always come from the trainee.
- The character must honor the Training Pledge whenever another member of his Discipline requests it. However, a character need not accept a Training Pledge from characters not of his Discipline. For example, a Weaponsmith need not accept a Training Pledge from an Archer who wishes to become a Weaponsmith.
- The character may only give up his Pledge Coin by passing it on to another trainee making a Training Pledge. If the character spends or loses the Pledge Coin, or someone steals it from him, he has one week to retrieve the coin before the blood enchantment invokes the penalty described below for breaking the conditions of the Training Pledge.

A character breaking any of these conditions immediately loses all Talent Ranks gained in that Discipline of a Circle higher than his Pledge Circle. Taking a Training Pledge does not prevent a character from using other training methods to advance, but he is still reduced back to his Pledge Circle if he ever violates the Pledge.

For example, if a Sixth Circle Swordmaster who took the Training Pledge at Third Circle is stripped of all his possessions by a vindictive river pirate (and thus loses his Pledge Coin), he must retrieve the coin within one week or lose all Ranks in his Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Circle talents. He keeps any Talent Ranks gained in First, Second, and Third Circle talents, effectively reverting to a Third Circle Swordmaster, possessing only the talents, characteristics, and so on available to that Discipline and Circle. To again advance to a higher Circle, he must start over again from Third Circle by purchasing training or taking the Training Pledge.

The only way for an adept to get rid of a Pledge Coin without suffering the consequences described above is to be asked for the Pledge and become a tutor oneself. A new ritual is performed between the new student and the old student that is now the teacher. Once this ritual is concluded, the original instructor may heal the Blood Magic Damage, and instinctively knows the adept's commitment to the pledge has been fulfilled. The adept takes the additional 3 Blood Magic Damage for the new oath, but may now heal the original 3 Blood Magic Damage. The adept gives the Pledge coin to the new student; he no longer has a Pledge Circle unless he seeks the Pledge again with another (or his previous) tutor.

The Blood Magic Damage of a tutor can also be healed if the trainee dies before passing on the Pledge Coin.

Ghost Masters

Characters may also use the unusual method of training for a higher Discipline Circle through a ghost master. Ghost masters are deceased adepts who achieved a certain mastery of a Discipline before dying. In centuries past, Nethermancers learned to contact the spirits of high-Circle adepts who had passed on, and to bargain with these dead masters for instruction in their Discipline. Over time, the Ritual of the Ghost Master spread to other Disciplines, and now all Disciplines have access to their own ghost masters.

In order to train with a ghost master, a character must first learn the Name of a ghost master whose Circle is higher than the charac-

Free Karma

Optional Rule: Gamemasters may wish to employ this method requiring less bookkeeping for replenishing Karma Points, essentially dropping the Legend Point Cost for these entirely. This provides low-Circle characters an edge, as the Legend Points spent for Karma become less important the further the player characters advance in their Disciplines.

ter's current Circle. Most of these Names remain secret, kept so by high-ranking members of each Discipline. Other Names remain locked away in kaers and citadels, awaiting discovery by lucky adventurers. Learning a ghost master's Name often proves the most difficult part of training with one. Finding the Name, or a person who knows it, may be an adventure in itself. Characters who know a ghost master's Name rarely reveal such valuable information for free—and the payment they ask might not be monetary.

To train with a ghost master, a character must have an orichalcum coin free of any enchantments, and must learn the proper summoning ritual. Knowledge of how to summon a ghost master is gained by learning the Ghost Master Ritual talent knack (p. 126).

All Disciplines have their own version of this ritual. The ritual must be performed at night. A character begins by drawing a circle on the ground around himself, then spends 1 hour within the circle mimicking the use of each of his talents. At the end of the hour, the character closes his eyes and speaks the Name of the ghost master he wishes to summon, then makes a Thread Weaving Test, using the Ghost Master Ritual talent knack, against the ghost master's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the ghost master appears. Otherwise, the ritual has no effect. The Ritual of the Ghost Master can be attempted only once per day.

The first time the character successfully summons a ghost master, he must give the master an orichalcum coin. On accepting the coin, the ghost master returns to his own world. After three more nights have elapsed, the character may resummon the ghost master. When the ghost master reappears, the character enters into a training pledge with him by taking back the orichalcum coin, enchanted by the master to serve as a pledge coin. The ghost master trains the character whenever he is summoned, but fades away at daybreak.

As with normal training for Discipline advancement, the character must complete 40 hours of training with the ghost master within three weeks of accepting the pledge coin. If he does not finish his training within that time, he must begin again. The character can continue to train with the same ghost master each time he meets the requirements to advance to a new Circle, as long as the ghost master is of a sufficiently high Discipline Circle. The training pledge made with the ghost master carries the same obligations as a standard training pledge. The ghost master pledge coin can be given to a trainee afterwards and become the pledge coin for that new pledge (and the adept will no longer have a pledge circle), but a pledge coin cannot be used in a ghost master ritual in turn—the coin for the ritual of the ghost master must be free of enchantments and works only between the adept and the one particular ghost master once enchanted. Once given away as a new pledge, the new owner cannot use it to train with the ghost master automatically, though, as the normal training pledge enchantment replaces the ghost master's enchantment.

Creating Experienced Characters

Rules for how to quickly generate experienced characters conclude this chapter. These can be used to replenish the ranks of your adventuring group after suffering casualties or when welcoming new arrivals. It is inevitable that characters in a long-running **Earthdawn** campaign will change over time. New characters will come along and older characters may leave or even die (the latter being a frustrating experience for a player, but part of the challenge). As the heroes rise through the ranks of their Disciplines, they become more powerful—sometimes to a level where it makes no sense to have inexperienced characters join them. Sooner or later, a more experienced character will need to be created. Unfortunately, this is a time-consuming process, and gets only more complex the higher the desired Circle for the new character.

Always ask your gamemaster for permission first before creating an experienced character! The gamemaster determines the Target Circle for the new character, and therefore how many total Build Points and how much Wealth will be available to the player to spend, using the Experienced Characters Table as a guide. The Build Points assigned to a specific Circle on the Experienced Characters Table are enough to advance to that Circle with Build Points to spare, but they are not a very generous amount. Some players may prefer to create a character of a Circle lower than the Target Circle, but with higher Talent Ranks or more Skill Ranks. This is a viable procedure under these rules—the Target Circle does not have to be reached, but rather is a relative measure of power. The process for creating experienced characters follows a series of four steps:

1. Create Beginning Character
2. Spend Build Points
3. Buy Equipment
4. Create Character History

Create Beginning Character

The first step toward creating an experienced character is to create a beginning character. Create a starting character (***Player's Guide***, p. 25), but leave out Step 6 (Talent Ranks and Spells are assigned below) and the 100 silver pieces from the starting equipment (they are replaced with the character's Wealth), then continue below.

Spend Build Points

The Build Points available to you are spent on your character's various abilities, for example to buy Talent Ranks, improve Attributes, buy Talent Knacks, and so on. The list below details how many Build Points it costs to change or improve a particular ability or characteristic.

- You may increase a Talent Rank of a talent from your first Discipline by 1 for 1 Build Point, but to no higher Rank than your Target Circle + 2.
- You may increase a Skill Rank by 1 for 1 Build Point, but to no higher Rank than your Target Circle +2.
- You may improve an Attribute Value by +1 for 1 Build Point. You may make a total number of improvements equal to the number of Circles advanced. No single value may be improved by more than +3.
- You may learn Talent Knacks for 1 Build Point per Talent Knack if you meet the knack's requirements.
- You may weave threads to threaded items by spending 1 Build Point per Thread Rank.
- You may learn additional Disciplines. You must purchase all First Circle Talents for an additional Discipline at once; you cannot end this creation process by buying only some of them. Talent Ranks in your second Discipline cost 2 Build Points, Talent Ranks in your third Discipline cost 3 Build Points, and Talent Ranks in your fourth Discipline cost 4 Build Points per Rank.

Buy Equipment

The character starts out with the amount of wealth in silver pieces listed. He also gains a free thread item at Fourth Circle (the gamemaster is free to overrule this if the rest of his group does not have any thread items).

The gamemaster determines the spells available to your character (except those gained from your Discipline at Circles 2 through 5; see ***Player's Guide***, p. 41). If you use the Spell Learning Cost optional rule (***Player's Guide***, p. 132), you must purchase spells with Wealth at this point.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the character may forge armor or weapons he purchases and purchase or enchant additional Thread Items.

Create Character History

Work with your gamemaster and the other players to integrate your character into the current **Earthdawn** game. Where has he learned his Discipline? Who were his masters? What places has he visited? What foes has he defeated? How does he know the other characters? These are just a few of the questions that the player will need to answer, in addition to those asked in **Flesh Out Your Character**, p. 31 of the ***Player's Guide***, before he introduces his new character into the game.

EXPERIENCED CHARACTERS TABLE

Target Circle	Build Points	Wealth	Legend Point Total*
2nd	18	300 sp	1,400
3rd	32	600 sp	4,400
4th	50	1,000 sp, Thread Item	10,000
5th	72	2,000 sp	23,500
6th	98	3,200 sp	48,500
7th	128	4,600 sp	95,000
8th	162	6,200 sp	179,000
9th	200	9,900 sp	287,000
10th	242	12,900 sp	552,000
11th	288	16,200 sp	1,034,000
12th	338	19,800 sp	1,900,000
13th	392	26,300 sp	2,950,000
14th	450	33,300 sp	5,400,000
15th	512	40,800 sp	9,850,000

* For use with the **Using Legend Points** optional rule only!

*For this example, we will use Broomé from the **Player's Guide** as a base, starting after the* **Assign Talent Ranks and Spells** *step (see p. 29 of the **Players Guide**).*

To determine Broomé's starting Build Points, Sebastian checks the Experienced Characters Table and notes that he has 50 Build Points to spend for his Fourth Circle adept.

To qualify Broomé as a Fourth Circle character, he spends 32 Build Points on his Discipline Talents from First through Third Circle at Rank 4 (8 × 4 = 32). Additionally, he decides to spend Build Points on the following Talent Options: Spell Matrix (3), Astral Sight (racial talent, 1 Build Point), Durability (4), Spell Matrix (2). At Fourth Circle, he spends 1 Build Point on Elemental Hold and puchases the Talent Option Item History at Rank 1.

Sebastian has spent 44 Build Points so far and spends the remaining ones as follows:

3 Build Points are used to increase his Toughness Attribute value to 12, which also increases his character's Toughness Step. Because he has Fire Heal at Rank 4, he meets the requirements for the Wound Heal talent knack and spends 1 Build Point to learn it. Sebastian decides to spend an additional Skill Rank Point on his Read/Write Language skill to learn Windling. That said, Sebastian decides to hold 1 Build Point to spend on Thread Rank One of his free Thread Item.

He has now allocated all of his 50 Build Points.

Sebastian has 1,000 silver pieces to spend in addition to his starting equipment (see **Equip Your Character** *in the **Player's Guide**, p. 31) and may choose a free Thread Item. He chooses a Spellmaster's Wand, and has the Rank One thread already woven as he saved 1 Build Point for it. He spends 100 silver pieces on a Fire Starter, 300 on a Healing Potion, and 600 on the Ice Mace and Chain and Throne of Air spells, because his gamemaster uses the Spell Learning Cost optional rule.*

To complete his character, Sebastian applies abilities and bonuses from Circle advancement as an Elementalist: +1 to Spell Defense, the ability to use Karma on Perception-only Tests, and free spells of Second, Third, and Fourth Circle.

The gamemaster checks Sebastian's character sheet. He has seven Discipline Talents at Rank 4 including his Third Circle Discipline Talent, Elemental Tongues, qualifying him as a Fourth Circle character. He has Rank 4 Fire Heal meeting the requirements for the Wound Heal Talent Knack. He has Rank 4 Elementalism, easily allowing him to attach a Rank One thread to his Spellmaster's Wand. The gamemaster approves the character for play.

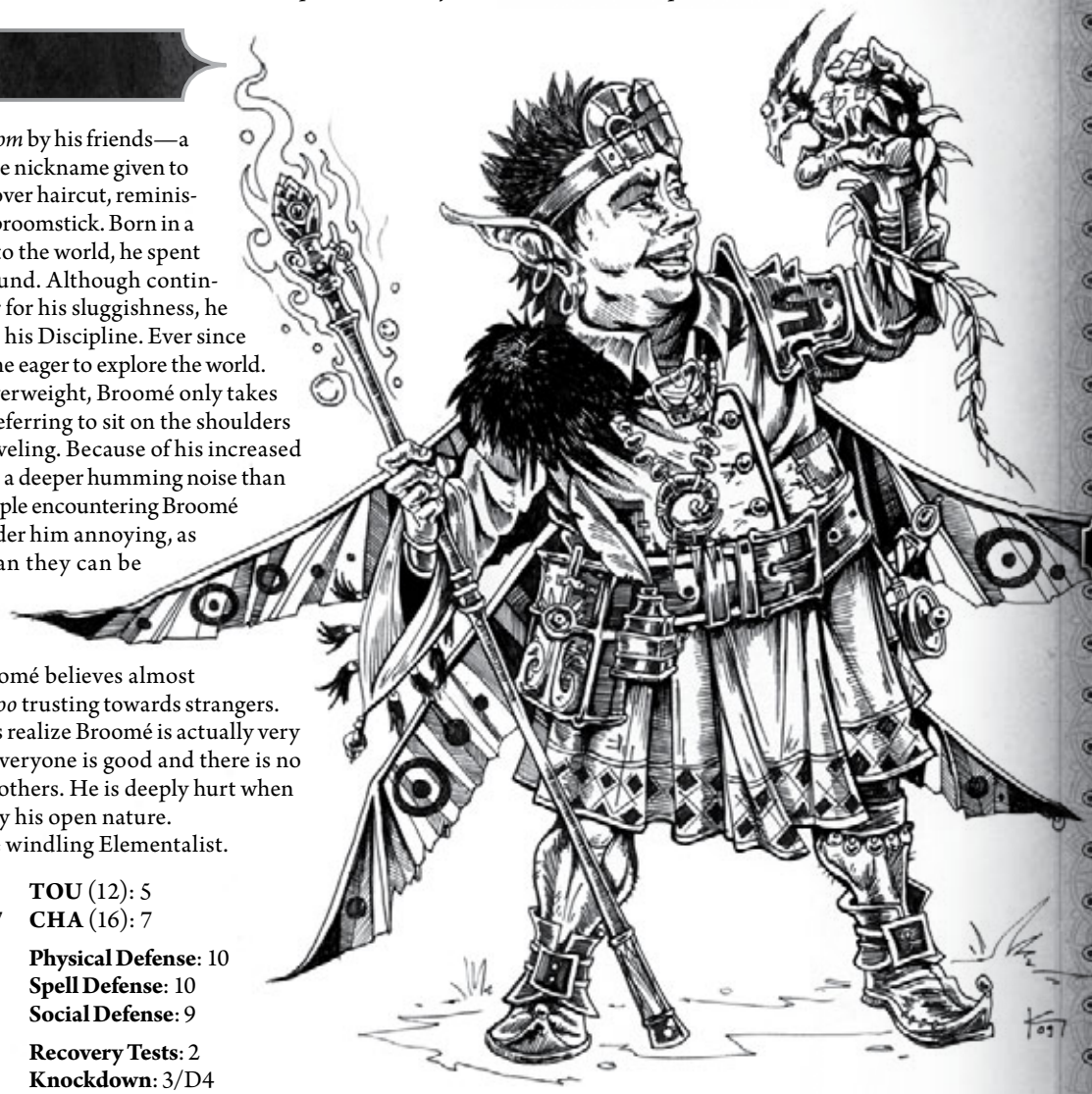
Using Legend Points

Optional Rule: For more flexibility (and if you have the time), you may also use the standard way of creating an experienced character. By building the character Circle by Circle using standard advancement rules (see **Building Your Legend** on p. 236 of the ***Player's Guide***), the result will be more organic and tailored to your needs. Use the Legend Points Total column as a guideline.

SAMPLE EXPERIENCED CHARACTER

Sebastian's experienced character, as created in the examples in the ***Player's Guide*** and this chapter, is detailed below.

BROOMÉ



Broomé is often called *Broom* by his friends—a play on his real Name, and the nickname given to him because of his wild, all-over haircut, reminiscent of the business end of a broomstick. Born in a kaer only recently emerged to the world, he spent most of his youth underground. Although continually harassed by his master for his sluggishness, he finally became initiated into his Discipline. Ever since he first saw the sun, he became eager to explore the world. Being lazy and somewhat overweight, Broomé only takes to the air when he has to, preferring to sit on the shoulders of his companions when traveling. Because of his increased body weight, his wings make a deeper humming noise than those of other windlings. People encountering Broomé for the first time often consider him annoying, as he asks questions faster than they can be answered. He is interested in everything others do. It is an easy task to use his curiosity against him—Broomé believes almost anything and is sometimes *too* trusting towards strangers. Only his closest companions realize Broomé is actually very sensitive. He believes that everyone is good and there is no reason to be bad or cruel to others. He is deeply hurt when people harm others or betray his open nature.

Broomé is a Fourth Circle windling Elementalist.

DEX (14): 6 **STR** (4): 3 **TOU** (12): 5
PER (16): 7 **WIL** (16): 7 **CHA** (16): 7

Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 2
Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 9

Death Rating: 50
Unconscious Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 9
Karma Points: 24/24
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 3/D4
Movement Rate: 3/8*

*** Flying Movement Rate**

Elementalist Talents (Knacks):
Air Speaking[D] (4): 11/D10+D8
Astral Sight (1): 8/2D6
Durability (4/3) (4): 4/–
Elemental Hold[D] (1): 8/2D6
Elemental Tongues[D] (4): 11/D10+D8
Fire Heal[D] (4): 11/D10+D8 (Wound Heal)
Item History (1): 8/2D6
Karma Ritual[D] (4): 4/–
Read/Write Magic[D] (4): 11/D10+D8
Spellcasting[D] (5): 12/2D10[SM]
Spell Matrix[D] (4): 4/–
Spell Matrix (3): 3/–
Spell Matrix (2): 2/–
Thread Weaving [Elementalism][D] (4): 11/D10+D8

[D] Discipline talent (the adept may spend Karma on this talent if applicable)
***Italicized* talents require Karma (except when also a Discipline talent)**
SM Talent modified by+1 rank bonus from Spellmaster's Wand

Skills:
Alchemy and Potions[K] (2): 9/D8+D6, Botany[K] (2): 9/D8+D6, Haggle (2): 9/D8+D6, Read/Write Language (2): 9/D8+D6—(Dwarf/Throalic, Windling), Robe Embroidery[A] (2): 9/D8+D6, Slough Blame (3): 10/D10+D6, Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6—(Dwarf/Throalic, Windling)

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Elementalism Spells: Air Armor, Boil Water, Earth Blend, Earth Darts, Flameweapon, Ice Mace and Chain, Lighten Load, Path Home, Plant Feast, Plant Talk, Throne of Air

Armor: Padded Cloth (Phys 2)

Weapons: Windling Dagger (Damage 4/D6; Range 8–16 yards/4–8 hexes)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Embroidery Tools, Fire Starter, Grimoire, Healing Potion, Linen Robe, Map/Scroll Case, Spellmaster's Wand Named Elemental Scepter (Rank 1; Spellcasting talent rank +1), Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 7 copper, 5 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the windling Astral Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense racial abilities. As a Fourth Circle Elementalist, Broomé may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Personality Traits: Curious (surface), Gullible, Lazy, Sensitive (hidden)

CHAPTER THREE

THE NOBLE WAY OF THE AIR SAILOR

The following essay comes from Adelo Nock, a human Air Sailor of the city of Travar. Though born in a town some two days ride from Jerris, he has lived in Travar most of his life (when not hurtling through the air on an airship). Retired from active service for some years, Adelo is best known for his brilliant performance when only a Novice during the Theran War.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Some Air Sailors ply the skies over just one region or between major trading cities. It's a rare Air Sailor who doesn't work for another to earn his place among the clouds—who owns his own ship and sails freely where he wishes.

—Shaguiss Plumm, Merchant and trader of Bartertown

The Name's Adelo Nock, sir. Been an Air Sailor ever since I first climbed down from my mother's lap. Air sailin's the best Discipline there is, bar none. What other Discipline gives you the freedom of the skies? What other Discipline lets you see the whole world without borders or separations, the way the Universe first made it? What other Discipline lets you sail through the stars at night like a boat through water, or brings you so close to a sunset you'd swear you can reach out and touch it?

And don't talk to me about Sky Raiders, sir. They don't even deserve mention. They take from people. We Air Sailors, we give.

We give our expertise, our fighting skill when needed. We give people a way to see the world from above, to see the parts of it outside of their own villages and towns. We give people freedom to travel, faster and farther than they'd ever get in boats or caravans. We help bring people together and help trading folk earn a livelihood. And yet, for all that, too many Barsaivians know nothing of the Air Sailor. High time to set the record straight!

ON BEING AN AIR SAILOR

This world of ours is a glorious place, and we Air Sailors get the best view of it. Have you ever stood on the decks of a galley watching the storm clouds gather on the horizon, or seen the sun set beneath your feet as the stars spark to life around your ears? Have you ever looked across the land and seen the whole long length of the Serpent River winding through the plains and lush jungle? I've even stared out into the Wastes once, for as long as I could bear it. An eerie land, the Wastes; compelling somehow, in a way that gets under your skin. You couldn't pay me to set a foot upon that wretched bit of earth, but I'd not trade the sight of it for any amount of gold. I'd never have seen the Wastes if I hadn't become an Air Sailor.

Of all the adepts in Barsaive, none gets as little attention as the Air Sailor. I'll tell you the reason, sir—most folk think the Air Sailor's close kin to the Sky Raider, one rung up on the rope ladder from thieving ork scorchers. Not a grain of truth to that, sir! You might as well tell a man he's no different from a burden beast. Let me tell you, in all my years of sailing I've yet to meet a Sky Raider that I'd trust as I trust any of my mates. Both the Air Sailor and the Sky Raider have a freedom not granted to those who can't take to the air; the difference between us is how we use it. A Sky Raider uses his freedom to plunder; an Air Sailor uses it to help the earthbound folk below. We share nothing with raiders save the sky itself.

A Sky Raider, you understand, can sometimes be as clever as an Air Sailor in planning his raids. He can even be courageous, in a brutal sort of way. But he feels no sense of duty to anything save his own wants. I'll tell you a story, and you'll see what I mean.

Me and a mate of mine sailed with a party of seventeen merchants—years ago, this was—and had the misfortune to meet a terrible, cloud-like Horror that Air Sailors call Windrider. (Other folk may know this Horror by another name, but that's not my lookout. My concern was only to defeat it.) Me and my mate were the only Air Sailors aboard, and the few survivors besides ourselves owe us their skins. Windrider appeared sudden-like, out of airy nothing like the poet says, and engulfed our poor ship in its foul smoky self. Any who stayed too long in its billows had the skin stripped from his bones. The rest of the sailors—not followers of the Discipline, mind you, but those we call airmen—started to panic. They saw the blood of their mates flowin' over the decks, heard the screaming, and started screaming themselves as they stabbed at the Horror with swords and belt knives. As if stabbin' a cloud would do any good!

Well, me and my fellow Air Sailor, Nestran Fryee, soon saw it was up to us to save the ship. Tying a rope around his waist, Nestran Fryee leaped from the deck, using his Wind Catcher talent to guide his fall away from Windrider. Over and over he did this, taunting

the Horror until it came after him. While he jumped and swung, I held the wheel, piloting the ship high into the frigid air around the peaks of the Delaris Mountains. When I got close enough, I rammed the airship into the ice-covered stone, trapping the Horror. Then Nestran—who almost didn't survive his final leap—helped me to herd the livin' off the ship and onto the snow.

From previous journeys along this route, we knew where a cave was, deep enough to shelter us but too shallow to hold Horrors or fierce beasts. Once there, I lit a signal fire and the next passing airship picked us up. Cunning, courageous, and looking out for others; that's the nature of the Air Sailor. I reckon that some day soon, the Namegivers will take back all of our skies from the winged Horrors that still plague us, and I'll be doing my part to help reach that goal. Catch any Sky Raider doing that, except to save his own miserable hide!

Any one of us who forgets his duty pays a price. An Air Sailor can't simply ride the currents of the world, taking in whatever happens to pass by. Each of us has a higher duty to his fellow sailors, to his ship, to the grounders who look up toward him. That last—our duty to the people below—is the most important of all.

Every Air Sailor in Barsaive has a wider and truer view of the world than folks with their feet planted on the ground, and with the gift of that view comes a responsibility. We're the first to see the Theran armada on its way to crush free Barsaivians, or the slave caravans swooping down on unsuspecting villages and snatching their unsavory cargo, or the flood or fire heading for the luckless town in its path. An Air Sailor who wants to use this view of the world to reach down and scoop up profits for himself belongs with the Sky Raiders, not with us!

Learning the Ways of the Sky

An Air Sailor is first shaped in childhood, by learning obedience to his wiser elders and the true value of honor. Cleverness and courage are needed as well, but without honor and obedience they're nothing much. Some learn responsibility later in life and make fine Air Sailors when they do, but for most, as we Air Sailors say, "the keel shapes as it was drawn."

Likewise, an Air Sailor must learn early on that he owes the world compensation for giving him life's necessities. A child who learns only to take most likely won't grow up to be a giver. Nor will he grow up curious, wanting to know the world for the sake of knowing. Such a one might as well be a Sky Raider, or else stay out of the skies entirely.

▲ ▲ ▲

My sailing career is as long and successful as Adelo's and I was not groomed to be anything more than a khamorro, *a deck scrubber. Nobody taught me a sense of adventure and wonder—I learned it on my own!* Jik'harra *and flair made me an Air Sailor, not blind obedience. Had I obeyed my "wiser" elders, I'd never have learned to fly at all!*

—K'tslade, Air Sailor of the House of the Spirit Wind

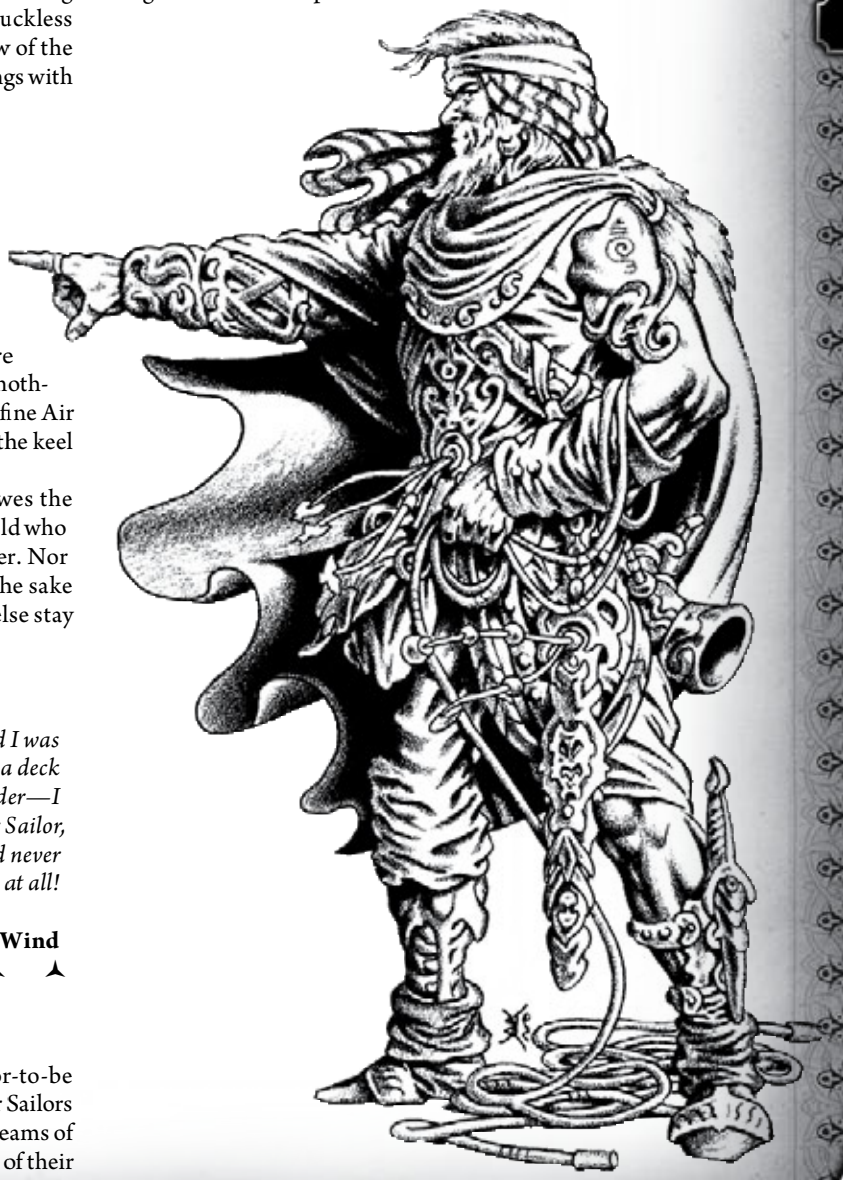
▲ ▲ ▲

Proving Your Worth

Once grown to the age of independence, the Air Sailor-to-be must find himself an established crew to learn from. We Air Sailors aren't so clannish as Sky Raiders, and so grounders with dreams of flying often come to us. Some Air Sailors I know take most of their recruits from among their own kin, reckoning them more likely to make good, but most of us have open minds about who has what it takes to serve the Discipline. I remember one youngling I took on—her mam was a famous Thief, her dad she couldn't name—who made a top-rigging Air Sailor. An unlikely background for a Discipline of such responsibility, but she had the stuff and she wanted to fly. Just goes to show, eh?

As soon as an adept takes a pledge from a recruit, the real testing begins. Recruits live among the airmen, doing all the scutwork and whatever else they're told to prove their desire is true and their will is strong. Plenty of the best recruits have done a stint in a militia or town watch and so they take orders pretty well.

The point of the testing is to drive the new recruit relentlessly for weeks, months, or however long it takes, until he reaches a breaking point. That's where he makes his choice; to uphold the pledge of loyalty he made as a fresh, new recruit, even though it burns in his throat, or to spit it back out laced with venom. The recruit who keeps his pledge for duty's sake alone is the one who'll make a master Air Sailor. And once the recruit becomes a Novice—the first step on the road to true mastery of the Discipline—he draws comfort from knowing that every other Air Sailor passed through the same stormy air. I'll not talk about the tests themselves, because they vary so much from Air Sailor to Air Sailor that it'd only be a waste of your ink and paper. All you need to know is that the testing is as difficult as possible.



In my own town, we can tell a young recruit by the glazed look in her eyes as she carries bundles, runs errands, makes ship repairs, cleans and performs a dozen other tasks at all hours of the day and night. No one speaks to her except to bark orders, which she must follow without so much as a pause to catch her breath. I have heard that harsh punishment rewards the slightest deviation, though I have never seen it myself. I am glad to know that the test period is brief; my conscience rests more easily.

—Jorge Werwisle, Merchant of Urupa

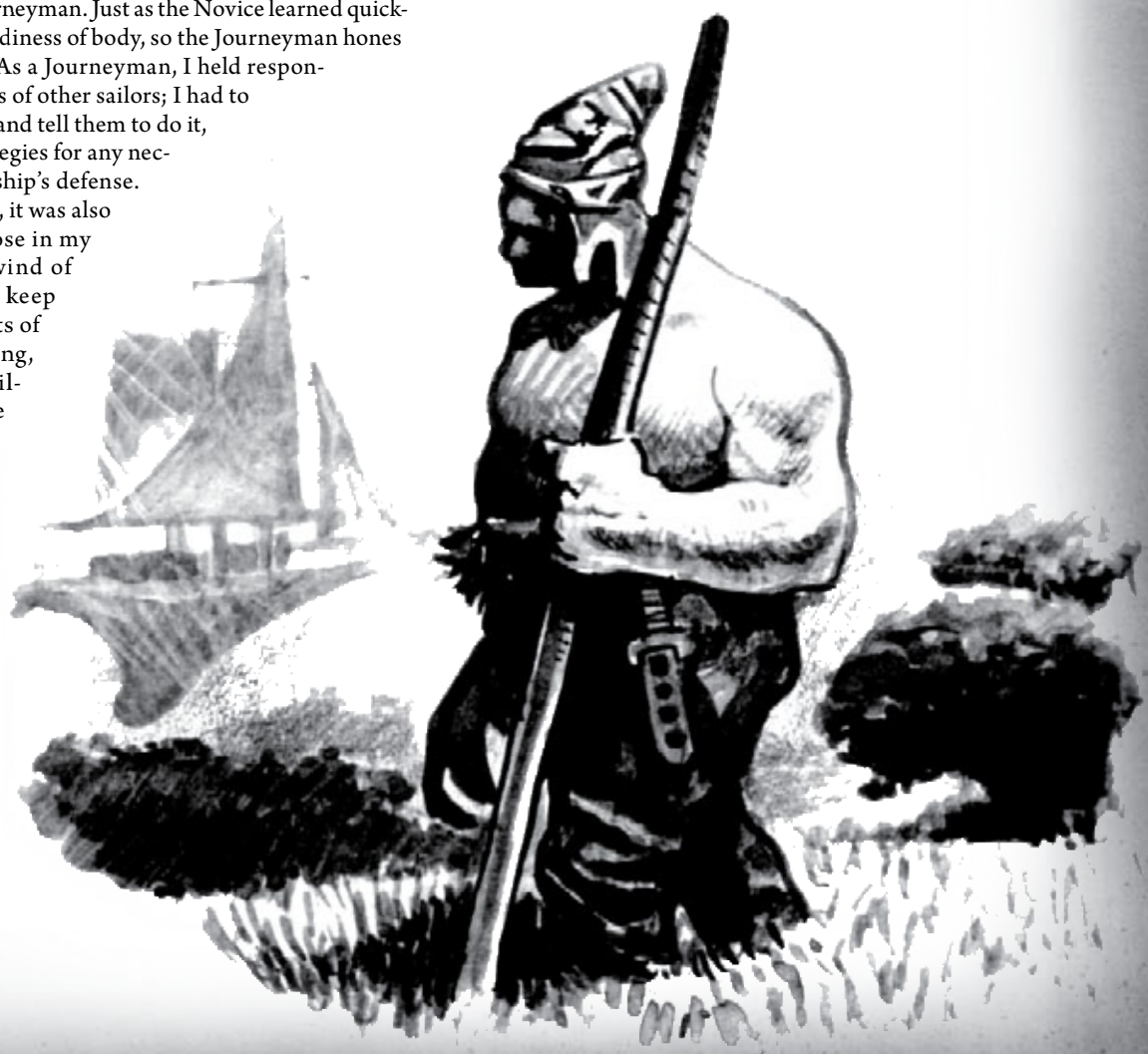
Once the recruit becomes a Novice, life gets a bit easier—though it's never soft, not by a long stretch! The Novice trains every day in the art of handling an airship, defensive fighting, and using weapons designed for the attack, all according to a schedule set by the master sailor. At least, that's how the best Air Sailors do it. A regular pattern to one's days teaches the importance of order and gives the Novice a little much-needed time to himself to absorb what's been thrown at him. I know of some Air Sailors who train their Novices at all hours of the day and night, thinking to teach them to be always ready for dangers that may approach from any side. These Air Sailors are the mad folk who actually enjoyed their time as a recruit. They believe that living in a constant frenzy is the best way to handle the sudden storms and squalls of the sailor's life. Truly, though, that brand of Air Sailor burns twice as brightly for only half as long. Foolish, if you ask me.

After a Novice reaches a certain level of competence at the basic skills, he becomes a Journeyman. Just as the Novice learned quickness, dexterity, and steadiness of body, so the Journeyman hones those skills of the wit. As a Journeyman, I held responsibility for whole groups of other sailors; I had to see what needed doing and tell them to do it, and I also planned strategies for any necessary attacks and the ship's defense. Among my other duties, it was also my task to see that those in my charge followed the wind of their strengths and to keep them from the tempests of their weaknesses. Young, inexperienced Air Sailors began seeking me out and asking to train with me. I took them on, and judged where fair weather and foul lay for each of them. All these things taught me to use the talents of my Discipline that rely more on wit than raw power. A mind as quick and graceful as a changeable spring gale is a Journeyman's best tool—and weapon, if need be.

It was also as a Journeyman that I truly learned to appreciate my mates. A Journeyman looks out over the deck of the ship and sees what needs doing, but he knows he can't meet all the needs of the ship himself. Instead, he does his own bit and makes sure others do theirs. An Air Sailor that reaches the Journeyman Circles of his Discipline finally sees past his own immediate tasks. The look on the face of a fellow who sees himself as part of a larger whole for the first time is the same expression he had the first time he saw his hometown from the air. Instead of feeling small and insignificant like some folk might think, he feels more important and more useful than he ever has in his life because he can see the rigging ropes tying himself to his mates. You see a little bit of yourself in those who train with you, and a bit of your own teachers in yourself. And once you see that, you truly understand that to leave your mates means abandoning a piece of your own spirit.

An Air Sailor joins the ranks of the Wardens when he successfully defeats a superior enemy using both agile wit and physical skill. Let me tell you, a Warden is one of the slyest opponents you'll ever face. He'll use your own wits against you, tie you up in the ropes of your own cleverness. I once faced a ship whose crew served a Theran Warden! The scoundrel used my own plan against me, and I didn't know a thing was amiss until he sprung my own trap around my ears. Lucky to get out alive, I was—but that's a tale for another time. Most Wardens work with trading companies, and if you ask me, the best of them come out of Travar.

A true master Air Sailor like myself deserves the deepest respect. There are only a few of us still around, what with time and age taking their toll, and so many dying in the Theran War. There's a few Wardens I know who'd make fit masters, though good candidates seem



fewer these days than when I was young. A master has a different life than any other Air Sailor; he serves only during the greatest of conflicts, and spends most of his time training young upstarts who pass the recruit's tests. Many master Air Sailors own ships or even shipbuilding companies like my own Dawn Flier shipyards. To keep my mind sharp and my body swift, I still accompany my share of airships on journeys across Barsaive. With my experience, there's many a hazard I can help the young ones avoid. As my age grants me a bit more time to do with as I like, like many a master I embroider airship sails. The handiwork of master Air Sailors adorns many of the greatest ships in the skies.

I have had the good fortune to acquire embroidered sails from Adelo Nock. The patterns and styles that spring from the mind and fingers of a traveled Air Sailor far surpass any other beauties I have seen.

—Jorge Werwisle, Merchant of Urupa

NON-ADEPTS AS AIR SAILORS

Now of course, there's sailors and sailors. A true Air Sailor is always an adept, but many sailors among an airship's crew learn the craft of sailing without following the Discipline. These, we call just plain sailors, more often airmen. Sailors not of the Discipline rarely serve their ships in the top ranks.

Not that those who learn the craft of air sailing aren't good folk, because they certainly are—some of them are amazingly skilled. Most of them can sail a ship, jump the rigging, and decipher the moldiest, most illegible maps I have ever laid eyes on just as well as their adept fellows. What they can't do is use the Discipline's magical talents. They serve well as far as they can, but they simply can't go far enough.

ON THE RACES THE SKY CHOOSES

The only Namegivers who never become Air Sailors—as far as I know, that is—are obsidimen. The rock-men are normally too tied to the earth to find sailing amid the clouds comfortable—at least, that's my thinking. Just as well, if you ask me—building a ship sturdy enough to safely carry them might be far easier charted than sailed. One of those fellows falling on the deck would likely break right through to the hull!

Windlings make some of the best Air Sailors around. They fly as easily as other Namegivers breathe and have an affinity for the skies that no other Namegivers share. And in a world full of hulking brutes like myself (at least, we must look that way to our small brothers and sisters) windlings must rely on their wits from the moment of birth. Good training for an Air Sailor, sir! The famous Pihgram Tor is one of the best windling Air Sailors I know, though I've never been fortunate enough to serve with her. That woman can survive any danger, and her ships are second to none in Barsaive.

Elves with a longing to fly often find their calling as Air Sailors. Sky Raiders won't take them—probably think they're too delicate for the life. I think elves just aren't thick-headed enough for sky raiding. They see the grace and beauty of the natural world so clearly that they've got to be Air Sailors if they want to tread the decks. I don't understand much of what the elves call the Wheel of Life, though my good friend Nestran tried many a time to explain it, but I do know that elves who follow the Path of Warriors are the least likely to take up air sailing. From what Nestran told me, that Path is somehow bound to the element of Earth, so I'd guess none of them want to stray too far from it. Followers of the Path of Scholars, who live to sharpen their wits, far more often find homes among us, as do the followers of the Path of Travelers, whose guiding element is Air.

Just to make sure the record's kept straight about elves being Air Sailors, you must understand that I learned all I know on the subject from Nestran Fryee. But I may have gotten my facts mixed, seeing as I rarely understood even half of what Nestran used to natter on about. If you want to know the absolute truth, you'd best ask one who knows about elves and their Paths first-hand. The important thing to be said is that I'd not hesitate to have Nestran or another elf like him serving beside me this very day. If he hasn't ascended to his folk's Citadel of the Shining Ones, then the place is surely empty, for no more loyal friend than Nestran ever lived!

Dwarfs feel a bit funny about life in the skies. They're as fond of earth and stone as of their own kin, and lots of them don't like losing touch with it. Those dwarfs who take up the Discipline, though, nearly always make a go of it. Not a lot of nonsense to a dwarf. He takes orders well when he has to and can always see what needs to be done. And you couldn't ask for a tougher fighter. Stubborn, that's what they are—too stubborn to give in even when they're bleeding half to death. Sometimes, though, that stubbornness works against them. Once a dwarf's set his mind to a plan of action, it takes a gale-force wind to move him a finger's-width from it. The dexterity of mind an Air Sailor needs isn't always a dwarf's strong suit.

T'skrang Air Sailors take a joy in the Discipline that the rest of us can only envy. Got a bit of a trouble with vertigo, though. If they could fix that small problem, more of them might become Air Sailors. And a good thing too, say I, sir; a skilled boatman would be a rare pleasure to teach. He knows half the skills of air sailing already! The winged t'skrang, the ones who call themselves *k'stulaami*, love to fly more than anything else, but their single-minded devotion to flight gets in the way of their good sense sometimes.

OF AIR SAILORS AND THE PASSIONS

Air Sailors are a devout lot. You try hanging high above the ground in a raging storm, bound to your airship only by a safety rope tied beneath your arms while you try to patch a lightning burn in the hull and see if the Passions don't seem like good things to have watching over you! An Air Sailor's life is both beauty and fear, and the Passions do a lot toward giving that life some order.

Most Air Sailors give the largest share of their devotion to Floranuus, Passion of swift ships and good cheer. I know some crews of Air Sailors who all follow Floranuus together; they believe that kind of devotion most appeals to the Passion of good fellowship. Some Air Sailors show their love of Floranuus by throwing wild parties every chance they get, drinking wine and ale, playing knife games, hull jumping and such. I've known many a windling Air Sailor to pull out her bottle of *keesris* at any opportunity to "make Floranuus merry." Myself, I'm all for a good time, but some followers of Floranuus take it a bit too far. Bad for discipline, it is. After all, how well can an Air Sailor sail or fight if he's reeling from a pounding head brought on by too much elven brandy?

The Passion Chorrolis has his followers among Air Sailors also, mostly those who work for traders. That Passion will aid any Namegiver looking to make his fortune, though Chorrolis isn't always too choosy about how they do it. Were the Passion more inclined to favor honest work over all else I might have followed him myself—though Chorrolis has watched well over my shipbuilding company, and I thank him for that. Some followers of Chorrolis, sad to say, are a bit too concerned with their own welfare and not enough with the good of those around them. If you ask me, Air Sailors who follow Chorrolis need to guard against greed especially well, lest it tempt them from their duty.

Of Those Who Serve Thera

Much as I regret to say it, some Air Sailors throw in their lot with Theran scum. Most of us have more honor than to serve Theran masters, but a few get sucked in by Theran grandeur and Imperial authority. They forget their duty to others, preferring to trade with Thera and get rich. They want to float to the top any way they can, even on the backs of others.

Then there are the poor fools who fall in love with the Theran airships. I've heard tales of young Air Sailors setting off for Sky Point in hopes of working in the Theran armada just because they want to fly a stone ship. Once they get to Sky Point, the poor idiots mostly find themselves bought or brutalized. Some folk tell me that Theran sympathizers approach young recruits to our Discipline who hail from poor villages and city slums, spinning tales of the Theran riches they'll get in return for good service.

I knew such a poor young fool once. Joeb Geden was his Name—a young, idealistic human from Travar. I took him on with high hopes and he didn't disappoint me. He worked hard, obeyed orders, and took to the Discipline like a bird to the air. Before the year's end, I made him my personal aide and right-hand man.

Then Joeb came to me one night seeming nerved up about something. He offered me a pint of ale and asked, as if he cared nothing for the answer, what I thought of the Therans. "Not much," I said, and spat.

He turned a bit red but held his ground, telling me he'd heard Theran airships were a wonder to behold.

"Really?" I asked. "Where might you have heard that?"

Well, that question ran all the sails straight up the masts. He started talking a blue streak, telling me all about the amazing Theran airships. Suddenly, as if he knew he'd said too much, he hushed right up and said he was going to bed. He never turned up for work the next morning. Three days later, I heard word he'd been sighted heading for Sky Point on foot. I've heard nothing of him since.

That's why I don't believe all the stories of prosperous Theran Air Sailors. The Therans are known to be a close-fisted lot, and Barsaivian Air Sailors who serve them most likely end up little better than the slaves they help to capture. Not that their wretchedness helps excuse the choice they made. Any Air Sailor who follows Theran ways, whether Theran or Barsaivian-born, is no true Air Sailor. I confess to a grudging admiration for their tenacity and cleverness in a battle, and the Passions know Theran ships are marvels, but none of that makes a difference. Theran Air Sailors are corrupt, and we have nothing to do with them.

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Despite Adelo's statements to the contrary, the Theran navy includes many Air Sailors among its members. Theran Air Sailors may not embody all the qualities Adelo ascribes to those of his Discipline, yet one must agree that they are true Air Sailors. This fact should serve as a lesson to those who accept any narrowly-defined vision of the Disciplines practiced in Barsaive. Many variations of each Discipline exist in this world, and no single adept's vision is the only true one.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

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Chain of Command

While not all Air Sailors actively serve aboard airships, Air Sailor adepts of different levels of capability are sometimes identified by a system of ranks mimicking the organizational structure of airships. This system reflects the typical Circles required to fill a position aboard an airship. Initiate Air Sailors are commonly called "deckhands" or simply "sailors," while Novices are called "officers" or "mates." Journeymen adepts are referred to as "commanders" or "captains," while Warden adepts may be called "commodore" or "admiral." The exact expression used differs from naval organization to naval organization, and the terms are more regularly used by Air Sailors serving in the military, where the positions are actually filled by adepts of the appropriate Circles. Inside a Discipline Status Level, some adepts make distinctions between these terms by exact Circle or the adept's Talent Option focus. For example, a Novice who learned the Navigation and Read/Write Language Talents as well as the Mapmaking skill could be termed "navigator," and a couple of Circles later "pilot."

Game Information

Roleplaying Hints

One trait common to nearly all Air Sailors is the difference these adepts see between themselves and Sky Raiders. The Air Sailor usually sees himself as more refined, craftier, smarter, and serving a higher purpose. This higher purpose is often expressed as concern for the greater good of Barsaive, or at least the people around him. The Air Sailor also rarely resorts to brute force when cunning will win the day, and is expected to outthink his opponents, not just overpower them. These attitudes separate the Air Sailor from what he sees as the selfish, barbaric Sky Raider.

Air Sailors usually have a strong sense of obligation to their current or former shipmates. Air Sailors often use the expression "never leave your mates," but few are ever told this outright; rather, they are subtly encouraged to embrace the idea of togetherness. Fellow Air Sailors may remind them to wait for a mate before leaving a bar, or tell them to be aware of where their mates are aboard ship during maneuvers. A natural extension of this camaraderie is a feeling of obligation toward a fellow Air Sailor who needs aid on a mission or personal quest.

Members of this Discipline almost always adhere to some code of conduct. An Air Sailor is expected to behave in a manner beyond reproach in front of outsiders. An Air Sailor who speaks in an unacceptable manner might be drowned out by his peers as they try to hide his indiscretion, or he might hear his own voice ringing uncomfortably loud as his companions fall silent to shame him. The offending party's mates might even loudly defend him in public and then deal out appropriate punishment after the crew returns to the ship.

Another common trait of Air Sailors is a tendency to be "far seeing." Many Air Sailors have elaborate long-term plans of some sort—owning a ship, freeing the lands around Sky Point from Theran domination, and so on. That plan often becomes that character's driving goal; he will never stop planning how to achieve it.

Discipline Violations

Nearly all Air Sailors follow some kind of informal code, the exact details of which depend on the individual character's personal vision. An Air Sailor who fails to follow his personal code risks suffering a talent crisis. In addition, an Air Sailor who chooses to flout the expectations of his fellow Air Sailors is likely to suffer a talent crisis, because a common emphasis of the Discipline is the brotherhood and companionship of a crew. If the adept is in a supervisory or command position, such a crisis could threaten the cohesion of the entire crew. The way of the Air Sailor is built

on cooperation and working towards a common goal for the common good, adepts acting as loners and following their own devices and vices rarely make it as Air Sailors, even if part of an adventuring group instead of a ship's crew.

Rituals of Advancement

Air Sailor rituals and tests for advancement resemble those used by Sky Raiders, except they traditionally focus equally on physical and mental prowess. Often the Air Sailor must bring back a trophy to prove that he successfully completed the ritual.

Recruitment: To be accepted as a recruit, the would-be adept hones his sense of duty and discovers his deepest desires through a grueling test of servitude. Most Air Sailors are recruited through trading companies or local militias. Sometimes a would-be Air Sailor seeks out a crew to join. Air Sailors accept recruits from most Namegiver races, but few units actively recruit outside of the militias in larger cities, as airships seldom stop in the countryside.

Novice (Circles 2–4): The adept helps repel or prepare for an assault by planning a successful defense strategy or coming to the aid of a higher-Circle adept and using trickery to gain the upper hand.

Journeyman (Circles 5–8): The adept enhances the effectiveness of an airship by modifying its construction, developing new drills or organizational methods for the crew, or coming up with a new series of defensive maneuvers for ship combat.

Warden (Circles 9–12): The adept defeats a more powerful opponent in ship-to-ship combat through trickery or superior planning.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Air Sailor draws a circle on the deck of an airship and sits at the center, envisioning flying the ship through a complex series of maneuvers. After an hour of imaginary flight, he visualizes docking the ship and meeting the ghost master at the dock. The ghost master boards the ship and joins the adept and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Discipline Combinations

Disciplines generally complementary to the Air Sailor are the Scout, Swordmaster, and Warrior. Each of these Disciplines traditionally requires a similar focus on wit, cleverness, and skill as opposed to brute force. The Elementalist is also complementary to the Air Sailor, particularly those who specialize in the element of air.

Disciplines traditionally opposed to the way of the Air Sailor include the Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, and Wizard. These Disciplines require so much energy and time spent away from the airship that potential teachers find no practical reason to take on an adept who wishes to follow both paths.

The Sky Raider is inimical to the Air Sailor in principle. Despite the many talents both Disciplines share, they have strongly opposing views, and only in exceptional cases will a member of one Discipline consider training a member of the other.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Cold Purify, Defense, Down Strike, Eagle Eye, Elemental Tongues, Endure Cold, Second Weapon, Sense Danger

Ninth Circle

Determined Charge: When the Air Sailor charges into a dangerous situation or combat, he may take 2 Strain to inspire his allies with his bravado. They all gain +3 to one Action Test of their choosing to face the danger or opponents, if they act within 3 rounds.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thought Link

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Shield Beater

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Life Check

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Rally

Master

Talent Options: Aura Armor, Champion Challenge, Ethereal Weapon, Lion Spirit, Multi-Tongue, Screaming Arrow

Thirteenth Circle

Safe Passage: Taking 3 Strain, the adept can navigate the safest path through unfamiliar territory by mentally contacting an air elemental. When caught in a major storm (such as that brought on by the Sky Raider's Lightning Song ability), the adept makes an Air Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster (see **Travel Hazards** in the ***Gamemaster's Companion***), the Dispel Difficulty of the storm if it is magical, or the opposing Sky Raider's Sky Weaving Test Result on the first Lightning Song Test. As soon as he makes a successful Test, he finds a clear path: his ship is not damaged by the storm, and does not need to make any further tests for that storm.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Second Chance

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Wound Transfer

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Vitality

CHAPTER FOUR

ON THE PATH OF THE ARCHER

The Library of Throal commissioned the following document for inclusion in this volume. In his zeal to deal directly with his subject, the author has neglected a salient point—his own identity. The writer of this essay is Oaken Aveldel, an elven Archer of great repute throughout Barsaive. He is best known for hitting the Impossible Rope at the Chasm of Sar-Fane, and for slaying the Horror known as Plan Crumbler with only two shots from his bow. The first shot put an arrow into the bony armor surrounding the creature's skull. The second shot hit the end of the first arrow, driving it deep into the monster's brain. I know of no one better suited to discuss the Archer's Discipline than he. I assiduously pursued Aveldel for this project, and am honored to introduce his submission here.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

The aim of this document: to allow the reader to understand the Way of the Archer. The strategy: to hit the heart of the matter. Therefore, I shall immediately aim for the central point. After loosing this first volley of words, I shall determine whether or not secondary targets remain to be hit. If so, I shall strike them in the order of their importance.

ON DIVIDING THE WORLD

The world is made up of two things, and two things only: missiles and targets. Most people, objects, and ideas belong in one of these categories. Anything outside of these categories does not matter. The Archer's challenge: to determine what is missile and what is target.

Scenario the first: You are in the Hall of Records at the Library of Throal. You are speaking to a shuffler of papers. The shuffler appears to be wasting your time. You wish to obtain a certain document concerning the location of a certain item; the details are unimportant. The shuffler repeatedly refuses to tell you where the document is or whether he will give it to you. Instead, he continually veers away from the direct path to your target. He describes, among other things, a book he is preparing. He asks you to contribute to the book, a point he circles around and then weaves back to again and again.

Question: Can the Way of the Archer win you victory in this scenario?

If you say no, you are no Archer. True, the literal drawing of a bow and firing of an arrow would serve no purpose here. Throalic authorities react poorly to one shooting their officials. But the physical motion of firing an arrow is merely one of many actions that defines the Archer's way. All other actions an Archer takes should be inspired by the process of aiming and firing missiles. This way of seeing the world is the key to success in all matters, whether of business, art, love or war.

Let us divide the actors of this scenario into missiles and targets. Note the plural; in most matters there is not a single target, but several. And it goes without saying that no Archer worthy of the name equips himself with less than the sufficient number of missiles.

We shall find the targets first. In identifying targets, one must also determine their order of importance. It does little good to attack a cadaver man when you may shoot at the Horror controlling the thing. In the scenario here-to-fore described, our primary target is the document. An Archer must always remember the identity of the primary target. Do not be distracted when a new target appears, nor forget the primary target if it drops out of sight. Our document may not be visible, but it is nonetheless our primary target because victory demands that we obtain it.

Secondary target: the paper shuffler. Often, an Archer must knock down a secondary target in order to reach the primary target. This condition applies in our scenario: the paper shuffler has access to the document and we do not. Therefore, we must hit the secondary target in order to draw a bead on the primary target.

Now let us consider our missiles. Every possible way in which we may hit the target—getting the desired document from the paper shuffler—is a potential missile. We must determine what missiles are in our quiver and which of them is the ideal one with which to hit the target.

Consider the missile of threat: we might offer to hurt the shuffler should he not swiftly comply with our request. But the shuffler is not stupid, nor as prone to mental wandering as he might seem. He knows we are not prepared to back up our threat and shoot him down. Therefore, if we employ this missile, he will call our bluff. The paper shuffler will then have the upper hand, and our primary target will be further away. Clearly, threat is not the proper missile for this task.

Consider the missile of bribery: we might present the shuffler with silver in exchange for the document. In order to be certain that this missile will strike home, we must use the art of seeing. We must carefully observe the shuffler, to see whether coin has any luster for him. In this case, however, we realize that what he lusts for is not money. Therefore, bribery will not serve.

Consider the missile of acquiescence: the paper shuffler most desires a piece of us. He wants us to write a document for him that

he may put in his book. His meandering words contain a hidden determination: he too has a target firmly in mind, and his possession of what we want is his missile. Using the art of seeing, we can determine that cooperation with his aims is the most effective missile for us—the superior means of striking our target. Therefore, we agree to write what the paper shuffler wants in exchange for what we desire. We have perhaps lost some dignity, and definitely some time. But we have hit both our targets, and that is all that matters in the end. Let others seek public honor, glamour, reputation. The Archer does not need such things. His legend rests on hitting the target. Nothing matters save for the bull's-eye.

Note that I have spoken in a single, concrete example rather than describing the way of the Archer in general terms. For the Archer, generalities do not exist. Only specifics matter—singular objects and beings at whom the Archer must fire.

On the Art of Seeing

The way of the Archer is the art of seeing through the fog in order to spot the simple facts hidden within complexity. The Archer sees from a distance. He scans the landscape for hidden details: flashes of light, movement, colors out of place, anything that may signal the presence of an enemy. He is distant, dispassionate, calculating. This state of mind is as true when the missile is actual as when it is metaphorical. The art of seeing is best experienced through the True Shot talent.

Scenario the second: You, the Archer, have selected your target. Said target is charging toward you riding a massive thundra beast and carrying an enormous battle-axe. If the target reaches you, either the beast's trampling feet or the metal blade of the axe will claim your life. The target is charging over a dusty plain, and the hooves of the thundra are raising a cloud of dust that obscures your view. It is also moving in a pattern dictated by slight undulations in the ground. Your task: to swiftly strike a partly obscured, unpredictably moving target.

You attempt to draw a bead, but the shot is too difficult. So you pour Karma into your pattern. It whirls through your pattern from one part of your identity to the other until it hits the place where your innermost self is woven inextricably to the idea of truth. Karma fires through this connection into your eyes, enhancing your vision. Your eyes can now pierce the dust cloud. Even so, you can see that your shot will not hit home before the target reaches you. So you pour more energy through your pattern. Beast and rider seem to slow, though your ears tell you their advance is as rapid as ever. You increase the flow of magical energy into your pattern until your eye freezes the target. Before you can think to issue the command to your arms, they have loosed your shot. Your arrow hits the thundra beast—for hitting the rider would remove but one threat of the two—directly between the eyes. The beast rolls, pitching its rider off. Dismounted and badly jarred by his fall, he is an easy target for your next shot.

At the moment your arrow hits home, you are most fully alive. You feel this way because you are truly seeing. This kind of sight, that reveals life-and-death truth, is a thing most Namegivers never experience. It is sad for them that they cannot share or even understand such stunning moments of insight. The Archer reveres truth, because the Archer has felt truth course through his very being.

Concerning the Enemy

The Archer's foe is whatever obscures sight. Darkness is a foe. Camouflage is a foe. Fog, glaring sunlight, heavy rains: all these are our enemies.

The Archer's greatest enemy is illusions and those who wield them. I have heard tales of adepts who are both Illusionists and Archers, but thankfully, they seem rare. I have never met such a person and would not care to. I cannot imagine what corruption of the way of the Archer is required to allow an Illusionist to follow that way. It is simply wrong to alter the truth of any situation with deceptive magics. Barsaive requires more honesty, more things that truly are as they seem. An illusion is nothing more than a lie writ large, given form by magic. I have never met an Illusionist I liked. Many of them have tried to win my regard, but I cannot stomach what they do. Most other Archers I know share my feelings in this matter.

Ultimately, the art of seeing allows us to tell truth from untruth. I am proud to belong to a tradition of Namegivers who speak plainly and always strike the heart of the matter. I do not dissemble, misdirect or misinform, no matter what price I may pay for my candor.

Understanding the Arc

The arc is woven into the thought of every Archer. The arc is the path the arrow follows on its way to the target. Whenever an Archer looks at a person, thing or place—the target—he measures with his eye, judging the arc. The Archer thinks in straight lines. Because we have little patience for circuitous discussion, courtly manners, or meaningless pleasantries,

we have earned a reputation for bluntness and impatience. Some choose to dislike us for this, but that is no matter. Thinking in arcs is most useful, both in combat and otherwise.

Scenario the third: You are one of a group of adepts hired to find the murderer of a Bartertown merchant. Your fellows are a Wizard, a Thief and a Troubadour. You meet for the first time to plan your attack on the problem you are being paid to solve. The Wizard wishes to expound extensively on the symbolic meaning of murder, then walk randomly through the town sensing the auras of passersby in hopes of spying an aura that he feels might belong to a killer. The Thief wishes to investigate the victim rather than the murderer, in order to discover the killer's reasons for his act. Reasoning—predictably—that profit is the likeliest motive, she wishes to begin with the victim's treasure vault. The Troubadour proposes to wander through the town singing the mournful tale of the dead man in hopes of saddening or shaming the killer into confessing his terrible deed. What do you do?

You point out that each idea proposes a wandering and winding—and therefore foolish—strategy. You attempt to explain the importance of arcs and connections. You propose starting at one end of the line and finding where the line leads. You draw arcs from one thing to another until the killer appears as your target. You begin at the beginning: the body. You see what connections it shows you. You find threads of gold silk clenched in the dead merchant's hand, so you follow the arc of the silk and see where it leads. The directed mind is the Archer's greatest weapon. Finding the path of the Archer means seeing the straight lines hidden in the tangles and following them.

The secrets of the arc lie in the Arrow Weaving talent. To practice it, you must know how to find the shortest magical connections between you and the thing to which you weave your thread.

Scenario the fourth: You have acquired a magical treasure, a great bow recovered from the Western Catacombs of Parlainth. You have learned its Name: Death Spiral. Now you seek to weave a thread to it—to connect yourself to Death Spiral. To do this you must find the arc—the straightest line—that ties your own identity to the idea of death and of a spiral.

The first is elementary: your arrows mete out death to the enemy. The second requires more thought. How do you best connect to the idea of a spiral? After some time, you hit upon the connection. You realize that others witless enough to cross you are embarking on a downward spiral to defeat, as surely as you have them in your aim. By finding the arc between yourself and this idea, you have woven the thread to Death Spiral. The idea of the arc is the center of an Archer's target when he learns new talents. Though learning any new talent or advancing to any new Circle also requires a skillful teacher, the primary burden lies on the student. He must understand the talent as it relates to his own experience. Only that way will he find the arc, the straightest line, connecting his own pattern and the new talent he seeks to add to that pattern.

Scenario the fifth: You seek to learn the Flame Arrow talent. Your teacher lays out its rudiments for you. Then, as is customary, the teacher bids you farewell, collecting her fee for her service. The teacher does not linger to discover whether you pick up the talent. Doing so is your problem now, not hers. You must rely on your eye, your ability to see the arc between you and Flame Arrow. You retreat to a secluded glen to think and to see. You empty yourself of all extraneous thoughts, concentrating only on the matter at hand. Slowly, a vision appears in your mind's eye. Not an illusion, mind you, but an acutely detailed and accurate memory.

In this memory, you are a child back in your home village: a village in the hinterland, a peaceful and quiet place. In this place, elves, humans, orks and dwarfs live together in harmony. You associate this place with your earliest, most golden memories. It also carries a cruel and shadowed memory of the black day when the raiders came. You remember the tears obscuring your vision. You remember the flaming arrows hitting the roofs of the thatched huts. You remember the running, the chaos, the destruction of your home. You remember the anger that filled your small, childish body. That anger now returns to fill your adult body—the body of an Archer. You shoot the anger through your True pattern like an arrow snapping from your bow. Your anger flies toward its mark, hitting all of what your teacher told you of Flame Arrow.

Your head reels with new knowledge. Flame Arrow is now a part of you, connected to your ancient anger. You will use that anger to direct the talent at your foes. From this day forward, whenever you strike out with Flame Arrow, you fire not only at your foe of the moment, but at the raiders who destroyed your first home and robbed you of your innocence.

This is the way to find the arc between your talent and your essential self. The Archer is often accused of being an unfeeling adept, one who sees things only from a remove and reduces other Namegivers to no more than targets. This belief could not be further from the mark. To find an Archer's deepest emotions, look to his pattern, to the lines between his memories and his talents.

Of the Bow and the Crossbow

Question: Are all Archers alike? To answer this question, follow the arcs. Does it make sense that all Archers should resemble one another? Have you not met laughing Warriors and mournful Warriors, reckless Sky Raiders and cautious Sky Raiders, thieves who hoard and thieves who spend? So it is with Archers. Though we are all tied to the same pattern, we are as individual as the followers of any other Discipline. Only those blind and ignorant fools who accuse of us being without emotion also believe we are all the same. Just as one who knows how to look can see the differences between every arrow, even those produced by the same fletcher, so every Archer has his own ways of seeing the arc between himself and his Discipline.

Certain common divisions, however, do exist between Archers. The central difference lies between devotees of the bow and adherents of the crossbow. When an Archer fires a missile at a target, the Archer sees the arc between weapon and foe, thus forging a mystical connection between the Archer and his chosen' weapon. In a sense, we see through our weapons as other Namegivers see through their eyes. An Archer's choice of weapon reveals something about him, and throughout his life that choice continues to shape and mold him. I wield the longbow, and have had the honor of fighting beside many practitioners of the crossbow. This is what I have seen: crossbowmen tend to be earthy and practical. We of the bow possess a mystical bent, a taste for metaphor. The crossbowman works by pragmatic logic, the bowman by intuition.

As a man of the bow, I am tied to the wood of my bow and to the individual craftsmanship needed to make it. Through the eyes of my bow I feel a bond to nature, the world of the forest and jungle. I am connected to the tree from which the wood of my bow was born, and so am at home in the woodlands. Among trees and vines and creepers, I can pick out furtive movements and see hidden dangers. I am connected to the skilled, solitary artisan who carved my bow. Many, like me, carve their bows themselves. Therefore, I am self-reliant, accustomed to solving problems by my own instincts. Within my bow, as within my chest, beats the heart of a loner. We bowmen are serious by nature, and when we act heroically it is often for such abstract motives as a desire for justice or the dictates of personal honor.

The crossbowman is tied to both wood and metal. He is tied to levers and cranks. Because the weapon he sees through is the product of mechanical ingenuity, he sees the world as pieces interlocking to achieve a desired effect. Moreover, the crossbowman's weapon is the result of cooperation between woodworker and metalsmith. Neither the wood nor metal in his weapon is worth anything on its own; they must smoothly combine to form a useful whole. The Archer therefore sees the ideal man as one who works

easily with others for the achievement of a mutual goal. His diplomatic instincts are more acute than those of the bowman; he often acts as the steady head in a party of squabbling adventurers.

The man of the crossbow is at home in the cities, where his weapon was forged. In the blackness of night in a maze of buildings, he can pick friend from foe. Neither rooftop sniper nor alley brigand can hide from his penetrating sight. A crossbowman is likelier than a bowman to have laugh lines around his eyes, is easier in his demeanor and quicker to tell a joke. Tied to metal, and through it earth, the crossbowman pays more attention to his next meal and the weight of his purse than airy bowmen such as myself. Some say that a crossbowman, when called upon to support a cause, will ask if it is just—but only after asking if it pays well.

Of course, these statements are generalities on which no Archer would wholly base his actions or judgment. One who truly knows how to see always scans the horizon for exceptions.

Regarding the Sniper

Every Archer possesses the capacity for sudden, decisive violence. He always searches for targets for his hungry arrows. In the mind of the Archer, the arrows in his quiver are like peeping baby birds, anxious to be loosed at the foe and drink of his blood. A true Archer keeps the violence within him in check. He only fires at the right moment for the scenario in which he finds himself. In our True patterns, this savage part of our natures is connected to our eyes, and so they must maintain this restraint. Our eyes, always alert to discern target from missile or foe from friend, serve us as our consciences. Without our capacity to see and judge truly, we become less than beasts. Sadly, the gift of judgment does not always accompany the art of sight. As with any Discipline, the way of the Archer is cursed with its share of villains. We refuse to honor such scoundrels with the name of our way, and so we call them snipers.

A bowman bad at heart is cutting and cold, driven by lust for reputation or power. Truth compels me to admit that even I feel a chilling thrill whenever I draw a bead on a living, breathing foe. It is a moment of true power over an unknowing opponent, knowing that with a mere flick of the wrist I can cast him into oblivion. This power offers a mighty temptation. More than one fresh-faced young Namegiver whom I trained in the Archer's way has become intoxicated by this temptation. To these cruel individuals, all others become potential targets and nothing more. Their ability to slay their targets from a distance is all that matters to them.

For any reader of this document who is a sniper or feels the temptation to become one, I have but one message: the sniper can also become a target.

The Sniper's Way

Optional Rule: Some gamemasters and players may want to explore the idea that the Archer is forever tempted to give in to the siren call of his blood-hungry arrows. Every time such a character cold-bloodedly picks off a Namegiver opponent who cannot defend himself, the character accumulates a Temptation Point. After each such incident, these "sniper" characters must make a Willpower Test against their accumulated Temptation Point Total. Once a character fails this test, he has succumbed to the lure of "the Sniper's Way."

Prone to lose control whenever they have a target in their sights, snipers must make a successful Willpower Test against their Temptation Point Total in order to keep to a plan. If this test fails, the sniper cannot control his urges and fires, until he runs out of missiles. A sniper can reduce his Temptation Point Total by performing Deeds of Atonement (p.8) or by exercising other spells or talents, at the gamemaster's discretion. For example, the Heal power of questors of Garlen might remove the Temptation Points of a sincerely repentant sniper.

Game Information

Specialists

The path of the Archer knows two specialists that distinguish themselves by their choice of weapon, the Crossbowman and the Bowman.

The **Crossbowman** is comfortable in social situations and towns and cities, is happy to work with others to achieve his goals, and knows the ways of Namegivers. He is the type of Archer found in militias or armies. He exchanges the positions of his First Impression and Direction Arrow Talents (First Impression becomes his Second Circle Discipline Talent, Direction Arrow is now a Novice Talent Option). Additionally, he receives Social Defense bonuses instead of Physical Defense bonuses, and vice versa (He receives Social Defense bonuses at Circles 2, 8, 10, 12, and 14; he receives Physical Defense bonuses at Circles 11 and 15).

The **Bowman** is comfortable striding the countryside alone. He is the type of Archer that lives solely as a hunter or ranger. He exchanges the positions of his Long Shot and Anticipate Blow Talents (Long Shot becomes his Third Circle Discipline Talent, Anticipate Blow is now a Novice Talent Option), and he exchanges positions of his Steel thought and Stopping Aim Talents (Steel Thought becoming his Fifth Circle Discipline Talent, Stopping Aim being available from the Journeyman Talent Options).

Roleplaying Hints

An Archer adept learns the art of seeing; he is taught to see that target, and forge a mystical connection between it, an arrow or bolt, and the space between them. A character might take this basic outline to extremes, applying the target-and-missile analogy to every situation. He might instead be a no-nonsense type who doesn't let the mystical talk get in the way of picking off enemies.

The character's vision will be influenced by the circumstances of his life before he became an adept. An Archer raised in an ork cavalry, for example, may espouse a fiercer, less refined version of the viewpoint expressed by Oaken Aveldel. A t'skrang Archer trained to protect riverboats from pirates might take the metaphorical aspect of the Discipline less seriously, while to a blood elf the metaphysics of the Discipline might be the most important thing.

Discipline Violations

Archers most often suffer talent crises when they stray from clear thinking and straight lines. An Archer who dithers, goes off on tangents too often, overcomplicates matters, or forgets his overall goal and heads towards a random dead end is ripe for a talent crisis. Like the followers of many combat-oriented Disciplines, an Archer may place a great deal of metaphorical significance on his weapon, and an Archer who loses his weapon—especially through negligence—might experience a talent crisis the next time he attempts to use the recovered bow or its replacement.

Nearly every Archer's training stresses the importance of properly choosing targets. If an Archer accidentally hits an ally or innocent noncombatant in battle, he might suffer a talent crisis

WARDEN

Talent Options: Blade Juggle, Critical Hit, Lifesight, Rushing Attack, Quick Shot, Tiger Spring, Trace Missile, Warp Missile

Ninth Circle

Create Arrow: Taking 1 Strain, the adept creates one piece of missile weapon ammunition from magical energy as a Free Action. The ammunition performs as normal for its type, but vanishes at the end of the round. This may be done multiple times per round.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Eagle Eye

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Warning Shot

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Dominate Arrow

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Blind Fire

MASTER

Talent Options: Chameleon, Defense, Ethereal Weapon, Lion Spirit, Second Chance, True Sight

Thirteenth Circle

Hail of Arrows: The adept may shoot more than one projectile with a shot. He uses a number of additional projectiles up to his Dexterity step, takes 1 Strain per additional projectile and if the attack is successful, each additional projectile adds a +2 bonus to the Damage Test. These additional projectiles do not allow the archer to attack additional targets, nor can they or their damage be enhanced beyond the original +2 in any way, only the original projectile can be enhanced by talents such as Flame Arrow.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Multi-Shot

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Screaming Arrow

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Wind Bow

for the remainder of the fight. In particularly egregious cases, where it was the Archer's carelessness or thoughtlessness causes the accident, he might need to perform a Deed of Atonement to recover full use of his talents.

RITUALS OF ADVANCEMENT

Like many martial Disciplines, Archer advancement rituals are commonly challenges that serve to demonstrate the adept's increased ability. As the adept advances through the circles of the Discipline, the challenges become more difficult.

Recruitment: Cities and villages occasionally sponsor festivals that feature Archery contests. To find potential Archer adepts, an Archer hides a target in a tree or bush far from the competition targets, then quietly mentions to the more skillful contestants that "a true Archer knows the real target." The adept recruits the first contestant to sense and strike the hidden target.

Novice (2–4): The adept makes trick shots of increasing difficulty: at full gallop (Second Circle), hanging upside-down from a tree branch (Third Circle), or using one hand and his teeth (Fourth Circle). Other adepts or elders may challenge the Novice to perform other shots.

Journeyman (5–8): An elder shoots an arrow, and the adept splits it with his own arrow, shot from the same position. Elders pride themselves on challenging Journeymen to match amazing, near-inaccessible shots.

Warden (9–12): The adept devises a test for himself requiring an astonishing command of a difficult talent, then calls together all other adepts in the area to witness the feat.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Archer crafts an arrow of black wood fletched with black feathers, then shoots it with all his strength into the night. He meditates as he searches for the arrow. Approximately one hour later he finds the arrow with the ghost master waiting beside it. The ghost master ritual continues as normal.

DISCIPLINE COMBINATIONS

Archers who wish to acquire multiple Disciplines are most likely to adopt other combat-oriented paths because the shared talents allow for rapid advancement in the second Discipline. Additional Disciplines of this type also give the Archer much needed hand-to-hand fighting ability.

The Cavalryman Discipline complements the Archer with the maneuverability granted by a mount, and an Archer who can strike reliably from horseback is extremely effective. Air Sailors and Sky Raiders share an appreciation for the air, and combine well with the Archer; the adept can pepper opponents with ranged attacks before the rest of the crew attempts a boarding action. Warriors also work well, as both ways traditionally mix mysticism with their martial practicality. Scouts typically share an emphasis on perception that blends well with the Archer.

While Thieves share a similar emphasis on perception, many Archers are reluctant to train them out of fear their affinity for stealth will predispose them to become snipers. And while Swordmasters have a complementary blend of talents, their traditional flamboyancy meshes awkwardly with the straightforward outlook of the Archer, and members of either Discipline are wary of teaching would-be initiates of the other.

The Illusionist Discipline is the only one traditionally opposed to the Archer's Way. The average Archer's contempt for the Illusionist is well known, and very few Archers will serve as masters to Illusionists, or choose to pursue the Illusionist Discipline. Archers are often equally unwilling to teach Archer talents to human Illusionists making use of their racial Versatility talent.

CHAPTER FIVE

KEEPER OF THE BEASTS

We are fortunate to have received the following treatise on the Discipline of the Beastmaster from an elven follower of that Discipline Named Esteyria. Other essays on this subject, delivered to us over the years, tended to deal only with the superiority of wild creatures as companions and teachers without revealing anything of the deeper motivations of the adepts who follow this path. Non-elven readers should take note that, because Esteyria sees her Discipline in the context of the elves' unique spiritual paths, her description of the Beastmaster Discipline is somewhat unusual. The exact date of this manuscript is unknown, but many of the references in it indicate that it was transcribed within the past ten years.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

ON BECOMING A BEASTMASTER

As a Follower of *Mes ti'Meraerthsa*, the Path of Warriors, I might easily have chosen to become a Swordmaster or a Thief. Many of my kind do. Thankfully, I am *Dae'mistishsa* and so do not see the choices of life as rigidly as some. I became a Beastmaster because that Discipline allows me to know intimately the truest and greatest conflict, that between Namegivers and our own spirits. I speak not of war, nor of combat where one is victorious and the other either dead or nursing her wounds. I speak of the mastery of self that commands others as forcefully as and to better effect than prowess with a weapon. Such mastery is no easy thing to accomplish; we must fight our own poor judgment and impatience every step of the way to attain it.

The beasts of our world teach us the first lesson of self-mastery: that our strength of will avails us nothing if we use it only to force our wishes upon others. If a carter whips his horse to make it go, the horse will buck and strain against its harness but will not move forward so much as a hand-span. The carter must master his annoyance, speak gently to the animal, and remind it that it wants to do as he commands.

Beasts do not disobey us for the pleasure of it; only Namegivers are such willful beings. The beasts, having no such flaw, survived the Scourge much better than we. The Namegiver races fell prey to the Horrors because they could so easily tempt us into a battle of wills, and our fruitless struggles fed their evil. The Horrors have no need to torture animals who neither resist, bargain, nor plead for their own desires to be met. But we Namegivers, intent on getting our own way, can be tricked. We enter into impious bargains to achieve our desires at any cost. In the end, however, we cannot master the world. We can only master ourselves. This is the first lesson of the Beastmaster.

ON LEARNING MASTERY FROM BEASTS

When a Beastmaster takes the first steps on her path, she may feel little more than a fondness for beasts and a desire to spend time with them. The true teaching comes from the beasts themselves and is interpreted for the student by a Beastmaster adept. Such a teacher can be found wherever animals are trained, and the student who seeks truly will always find someone to set him on the correct path.

The Beastmaster must first discover and learn to see through the first veil. Those who are truly called to the Discipline will discover the veil simply by adopting and observing an animal companion. Many readers might believe that city life gives them an advantage in this, because companion animals such as donkeys, horses, and dogs abound there. In truth, however, it is difficult to learn of the first veil from a tame beast. A city-dwelling Beastmaster should choose as her companion an untamed city cat, rat, or bird in order to learn the lessons of its independent spirit. Would-be adepts who find wild-spirited companions in the untamed lands of Barsaive usually travel with a better guide through the first veil.

The first veil separates Namegivers from beasts, and all living things from the Horrors. Once you perceive the veil, and then see through it, the mist over the world clears and lets you see your surroundings truly for the first time. When you gaze at your faithful steed and see not merely a burden beast, but a spirit shining at you from its eyes with the clarity of starlight—when a beast's soul reaches out and touches yours—you have achieved your first glimpse through the veil. Some Beastmasters find their way through the first veil without a teacher's guidance, though only under unusual circumstances. An ork Beastmaster of my acquaintance, M'rok Grimshock, followed the Cavalryman Discipline before undergoing the transformation that led him to the Beastmaster's path. Though a true friend to his mount, he knew nothing of the ways of other animals. He did not even like them much; they made him uneasy.

During one brutal battle, Grimshock's mount fell beneath him, sending them both tumbling into a steep ravine. His companions, unaware of his fate, gave him up for dead when the fighting ended. All night, Grimshock sat beside his gravely injured mount, until at dawn the steed passed from this life. Grimshock, overcome with grief, stormed the deaf heavens with tears and cried in memory of his slain companion.

When the beasts in the ravine heard his heart-felt mourning, they gathered around the stricken ork. Perhaps it was Grimshock's strength of will or the depth of the bond he still felt for his dead mount, but the beasts responded to something in Grimshock—

rather than slay him and devour both bodies, the beasts mourned with the Cavalryman. In the dawn of that sad day, Grimshock broke through the veil. He saw the animals' hearts, and they comforted him. Later that day, Grimshock returned to his fellows on the back of a huge, brown bear. From that time forward, Grimshock studied the ways of the Beastmaster, and has become legendary throughout Barsaive. (In Grimshock's version of the tale, he tamed and rode a brithan. Knowing the nature of those beasts, even I cannot believe that story!)

On the Virtues of Strength and Patience

Once the Beastmaster sees through the first veil, she can begin reaching the minds of the beasts. Many people believe that training an animal means forcing your will upon it, but this is not so. A Beastmaster must possess a strong will, but only because no animal will bond with a weakling. Weakness is dangerous, for a weak animal swiftly succumbs to peril. A Beastmaster must prove to the creatures she trains that she is strong and knows what needs doing. She does this not by forcing the beast to follow her, but by clearly showing the creature the direction she intends to go. All creatures know when to follow a leader. Show them that you are such, and the beasts cannot help but fall in line.

Consider the wolf and the cougar. One hunts alone, the other follows the leader of its pack. Yet both recognize the weakness of their prey, and that is why they attack. And both will come at the call of a strong Beastmaster; a weak and undisciplined Beastmaster, they abandon. They can see strength and weakness at a glance, and know the difference between them.

A Beastmaster must also have patience, for it takes time to build the trust that truly commands an animal. You cannot simply flash them an empty smile full of charm and hope to win them over. Animals know nothing of flattery. They see what is before them and respond to it. A Beastmaster must therefore also know her own flaws and how best to overcome or hide them. If you stink, beasts do not politely hold their breath and stay near you. If you speak loudly and foolishly, they do not listen patiently while you babble. If you are drunk, they do not carry you back to your pallet to sleep it off. The beasts of the world will not bear your flaws; they react to those they see and ignore what you do not flaunt at them.

Patience lets a Beastmaster bond with many creatures by learning how each expects to be treated. Patience builds trust and shows a beast your worth. Patience is the soul of self-mastery. Only if you prove your worthiness to a creature can you teach that creature. After all, a trained beast gives us far more than we give it. We train them to work for our needs, not for theirs. If we want the beast we train to give of its best for a far lesser return, we must be worthy of such a gift. Therefore, after we have taught the horse the way in which we need it to carry us, we must then recognize what it needs in return, and fill that need as best we can. A Beastmaster who does this receives the willing service of a companion who will never betray her.

One who has acquired an animal companion and pierced the first veil is a novice, known to other Beastmasters as a *tyro*. A *tyro* does whatever is needed to deepen her understanding of many beasts' ways, often earning her daily bread taming and training workbeasts for others. In addition to animal ways, this work teaches the *tyro* more of the ways of her fellow Namegivers by requiring her to discover whether they are deserving of a beast's labor or not. Turning a trained beast over to a neglectful or abusive master violates the trust between beast and *tyro*; it is the worst deceit of which a novice Beastmaster can be guilty. Such a betrayal, whether knowing or unknowing, can only serve to impede the Beastmaster's growth in her Discipline.

When a *tyro* has learned to understand many different creatures, she tests herself by forging a bond between creatures that are natural enemies, using their mutual trust of her to bring them together. If she succeeds in this, she becomes a Journeyman, or *par*. I achieved that station by calling upon creatures of land and sea to save a troll child stranded on a friend's raft from floating away. I persuaded several giant salmon to push the raft downriver to a ford, where a family of bears waded into the shoulder-high waters and stopped the raft's descent. None of the bears so much as glanced at the salmon, though great salmon are a bear's favorite delicacy.

Once a Beastmaster becomes a *par*, she tests her own skills against the strength of the beasts of the land. Such tests are often solitary, including such acts as attending the birth of wild animals, or joining a pack of animals and being accepted as one of them. Some *pars* begin working with only magical beasts. A *par* must set herself the most exacting tests possible, and repeat them until she can meet their challenges. A Beastmaster who does this may rightly claim the status of Warden. Though it is the *par* herself who determines when she has become a Warden, rather than a teacher, she may only claim this status when inner truth tells her that she merits it.

A Beastmaster who deceives herself or others about her true standing may as well renounce her Discipline, for she will never progress any further.

On the Many Kinds of Beastmasters

Some Beastmasters feel drawn to all types of beasts, desiring to work with and learn from them all. Such a one loves nothing more than learning the ways of an unfamiliar animal, and often travels across the land in search of more and more different creatures with whom to bond. I have known such many-minded Beastmasters to spend years wandering through wild lands, seeking fantastical animals who exist only in rumor or legend. Barsaive owes these devoted Beastmasters a debt beyond price, for it is they who bring back tales of the unusual creatures they have encountered and share with their fellow Namegivers the secrets they have uncovered.

Still other Beastmasters are drawn to magical beasts. I have known pars and wardens who so thrive on challenge that they work only with magically endowed creatures, finding all others too biddable for their liking. It is indeed a much greater challenge to prove oneself a worthy leader to an animal capable of wielding magic! Some magical Beastmasters believe that the secret to all beasts' survival of the Scourge lies in the creatures with magical skills. Indeed, some claim that certain beasts developed magical abilities because of the Scourge!

I have also met certain Beastmasters who call themselves Scouts. These, more than any, wish to learn from the beasts in order to help themselves, rather than to learn self-mastery. More than one young Scout has come to me for training, seeking the gift of knowledge so that they may borrow the sharp nose of the wolf or walk the silent tread of the cat. Too often, regrettably, their interest stops there. They are quick to pick up certain talents, and if they had the proper devotion to their Discipline, they could become able Beastmasters.

To the everlasting sorrow of every true Beastmaster, some of our number enslave the beasts who trust them. Such folk most often work only for profit and know nothing of self-mastery. Because the bonds formed between these Beastmasters and their animals are flawed and weak, such enslaved beasts often break free from their captivity or perish in the attempt. Such tragedies only serve to hide the secrets of the beasts deeper from us, because they teach the beasts to run from the Namegiver races. The Beastmaster who forsakes her duty to treat the creatures of the land with respect in return for power or coin can scarcely be called a Beastmaster, save that she has certain talents of our Discipline. Those of us who live by higher ideals know it is a sin to abuse our Discipline's magic and so dishonor the noble creatures who survived the Scourge. We who follow the true path shun the lesser Beastmaster, and no honorable teacher will train one. Just as stronger animals leave the weak and sickly to heal or die alone, so we leave the Beastmaster who exploits her animals to suffer the pangs of her own conscience.

I have often heard the tale of such a lesser Beastmaster, Named Kreg Shuerslan, who lived in Bartertown. Each year he paid others to capture animals from the wilds and bring them to his stable. There he whittled away at their hearts and minds, forcing his will upon them with lash and stick, preparing them for service in the mines or on farms or as pack animals for adventurers. Drunk with his own power, he enslaved all creatures on whom he could lay his brutal hands: even those creatures who should never have felt the hands of a Namegiver master.

One day, a mysterious stranger offered Kreg unheard-of wealth to tame a fleet of espagras as battle mounts. The espagra is a dangerous creature, able to wield magic in its wrath. But Kreg, sure that he could break any creature's will, gathered many hearty souls together for his espagra-hunting expedition. One of their number was a windling Troubadour, brought along to commemorate the event with a song. As Kreg strode out of town with much fanfare, he bragged that all of Bartertown would fall at his feet when he returned with his tame espagras.

A year and a day later, the windling Troubadour returned to Bartertown alone. She landed atop a statue in an open square, unslung her harp from her back, and began to sing the song of Kreg's expedition. She called it the *Song of the Great Espagra*. It told of a foolish Beastmaster battered to death by the great espagra, who then carried the Beastmaster's broken body straight toward the sun and dropped it in the path of his fleeing retainers.

I have always liked that story.

Of Those Races Unsuited to the Discipline

Though it might seem that any Namegiver race should be able to learn from beasts, two have marked difficulty doing so. Neither the obsidiman nor the t'skrang are well suited to the Beastmaster Discipline, and I believe I can guess why.

The obsidiman, though patient enough to prove himself a worthy leader and heart-strong enough to learn self-mastery, is most often so devoted to the earth itself that its mere creatures cannot hold his attention. He is so busy caring for the land that he cannot care for the beasts of Barsaive as a Beastmaster must.

The t'skrang sit on the other side of the donkey. For them, impatience is the great failing; no t'skrang I have met is willing to take the time to slowly teach an animal that he is its master. Also, the t'skrang love showmanship, and there is little dazzle or flair in what a Beastmaster does. I have met many t'skrang Scouts who have adopted practical applications of Beastmaster talents, but they care little for the underlying truths of our path. The Beastmaster's way requires a steady mind and a contemplative soul, and most t'skrang prefer to live their lives too swiftly.

Anyone who believes that t'skrang lack patience has never sailed a riverboat, nor tried to sell spices to orks who lack any decent palate.

—Sylviril, captain of the *Nemorth*

On the Beastmaster's Faith in Jaspree

Though a Beastmaster certainly may follow other Passions, all those I have met give the first loyalty of their hearts to Jaspree. No other Passion is closer to the spirit of the Beastmaster. Half beast and half Namegiver, Jaspree watches over her beast-children, aiding them and speaking directly to their hearts. This last is what all true Beastmasters strive to do, and Jaspree shows us the way. Someday, when we Namegivers are ready, the Passion will impart this knowledge to us so that all may know what we who master the beasts seek to discover.

We Beastmasters know that Jaspree loves all living things, but some followers of this Passion sadly believe otherwise. Certain questors of Jaspree value plants over animals, and of these misguided folk the Beastmaster must be wary. I once encountered

such a solitary questor in a peaceful forest glen, wherein I had settled to carry out my Karma ritual. The questor happened upon me, realized what I was doing, and cursed me for drawing in beasts to destroy her forest. As she raved, she flung herself at me and began beating me about the head and shoulders. As soon as I recovered from the shock of her attack, I fled.

Since then, I have avoided places where I can see no beasts, rather than run across such a questor again and perhaps be forced to hurt her in my defense.

On Avoiding the Taint of the Horrors

The Beastmaster, by nature, spends a great deal of time with the beasts of the wilds. Traveling the untamed lands in search of new creatures is exciting, but also full of hazards. A Beastmaster must not allow her interest in strange animals to overshadow caution when approaching such beasts, lest she be entrapped by a Horror using some animal-like construct as a lure. A Beastmaster is a great prize for a Horror; if these abominations from other-where can pervert our Discipline's magic, they may use the Beastmaster's talents to create bestial servants. Such tainted animals can be the Horror's eyes and ears to far-off villages and towns; they may run mad under the Horror's touch and maim or kill all in their path. If a Horror uses the Beastmaster's bond to taint a magical beast, the beast's powers are turned to the Horror's will, causing untold destruction.

Worse than this, however, is the corruption of the very fabric of nature by a Horror-tainted Beastmaster. Through a Beastmaster's mind and heart, a Horror can manipulate the first veil, warping it so that the Beastmaster sees only the brutality that that Horror wants the Beastmaster to absorb. The Beastmaster's tainted sight in turn taints the veil, so that the darkness of it forever destroys the possibility of trust between beast and Namegiver. Sometimes, though less often, the Horror will cloud the veil, showing the beasts in a dimmed light so that the Beastmaster will overestimate her power over them. Many Beastmasters die under this foul influence, however, and few Horrors will slay quickly if they can torment a soul for years.

Those town and village folk who dwell in safer lands often fear the "touch of the wild" that the Beastmaster brings, and so we often must prove ourselves untainted by the Horrors. Simply working harmoniously with our creature companions does not always allay these fears, as many folk are unaccustomed to Beastmasters and our ways. Art is a better way to prove one's purity, and gives the artist much joy besides. Some Beastmasters engage in body painting, and a true master of this art can achieve a masterpiece that rivals even the loveliest embroidered creations. Others of us practice sculpture of stone or wood. I am a woodcarver, and know no greater joy than to vividly render the form of a living beast in unliving wood. I was once asked to carve a statuette of a gazelle for King Varulus III, as much to test my purity as to enrich His Majesty with the beauty of my work.

On the Beastmaster's Duty since the Scourge

Some who call themselves scholars tell us that the ferocity we see so often in the beasts of Barsaive nowadays is a permanent change, wrought by the ravages of the Horrors. These same bookish folk would have us believe we can do nothing to reverse the change. Such convictions are an appalling display of misguided ignorance. If the Scourge had so greatly changed the beasts of Barsaive from friend to enemy, no adepts could follow the way of the Beastmaster, nor could we still learn from our animal companions. Jaspree would never so utterly forsake her children, both beast and Namegiver, as to leave a permanent gulf of fear between us. If the mistrust between beast and Namegiver truly cannot be bridged, there is greater reason than ever to lament the Scourge and fear the lingering presence of the Horrors.

Indeed, the presence of so many generations of Beastmasters in Barsaive only reaffirms my belief that Jaspree has called us to bridge the gap created by the Scourge and strengthen the too-often weakened bond between the Namegiving races and the creatures of the land.

I urge the reader to keep in mind the often maudlin temperament of Beastmasters when considering this final paragraph. Many of Barsaive's beasts are dangerous, and Beastmaster sentimentality should not lull anyone into thinking otherwise.

—Melim, assistant scribe and copyist to the Hall of Records

GAME INFORMATION

ANIMAL COMPANIONS

Beastmasters usually take animal companions to accompany them on adventures. Such partnerships resemble those between a Cavalryman and his mount, though they are not usually as strong or as lasting. Beastmaster characters can gain an animal companion through use of the Animal Bond and Animal Training talents. If a character takes the time to correctly bond with and train an animal, the Beastmaster gains an ally that may accompany her on adventures. If the gamemaster permits it, this animal can attack enemies and perform other duties for the Beastmaster.

Gamemasters should carefully consider a player's choice when allowing a Beastmaster character to choose a potential animal companion. For example, only a few Beastmasters throughout all of Barsaive have magical creatures as companions and that percentage should remain low, though high-Circle adepts may manage this difficult feat. The most common companions for Beastmasters are mundane animals such as dogs, tigers, monkeys, eagles, or hawks.

While a Beastmaster is not limited to one animal companion, it is recommended that the number of companions that have a regular impact on play is kept low. For example, it would be overwhelming and time-consuming if a Beastmaster has two dozen tigers fighting besides him, but it should be fine for everyone involved if a Beastmaster has a handful of companions that each fill a certain task and do not all participate in fights.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

The Beastmaster should strive to strike a balance between his appreciation for animals and his own status as a Namegiver. The Beastmaster delights in the company of animals, but cannot simply shun his fellow Namegiver races. The player should emphasize the Beastmaster's aloofness without making him antisocial. Beastmasters run a gamut of personalities, from those who view animals with sentimental affection to those who see them as enigmas to be deciphered. Beastmasters also express varying views as to the superiority or inferiority of Namegivers versus beasts. How the Beastmaster character behaves toward his animal companions when he is not seeking adventure can offer an opportunity for great insight into his personal vision of his Discipline.

What animals does he work with? How does he spend his time? What is he learning from the animals, and what is he teaching them? Though encounters that answer these questions may be brief, occasionally playing out these everyday interactions can enrich the character immeasurably. Gamemasters should look for ways to encourage this kind of roleplaying, even during adventures that might not otherwise focus on the Beastmaster and/or his creatures. If a Beastmaster regularly travels with one or more animals, the gamemaster should not conveniently forget these beasts when the character enters an inn or goes into combat. The player may want to control the beasts' actions, but ideally those decisions should come from the gamemaster. After all, animals are independent beings, and may react predictably, but should not be taken for granted. Even the most gifted Beastmaster cannot always accurately predict or dictate the actions of his animal companions.

A Beastmaster's personal vision should encompass at least some of the Discipline's higher ideals. An adept who acts like the "lesser Beastmaster" described in the fiction may suffer fewer talent crises, but he will likely have more difficulty finding Beastmasters willing to train him. He may even have difficulty working with his animals, because of the lack of mutual respect and trust between the character and his beasts.

DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS

No matter how a Beastmaster sees the world or his Discipline, he should be committed to his relationship with animals. A Beastmaster who bases his relationship with animals on falsehood, tricks his animals into sacrificing themselves, or sells them into slavery to cruel masters is likely to sever a vital link with his Discipline and suffer a talent crisis. Such a character might restore

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Bestial Toughness, Cobra Strike, Enduring Art, Howl, Incite Stampede, Lion Spirit, Safe Path, Tame Mount

Ninth Circle

Tough Hide: The adept's skin is infused with bestial resiliency, providing a natural Physical Armor rating of 3. This stacks with other armor, but is obvious upon close inspection.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Chameleon

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Animal Leadership

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Toughness-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Develop Animal Sense

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Bestial Resilience

Master

Talent Options: Defense, Echo Location, First Ring of Perfection, Plant Shelter, Spirit Strike, Trample

Thirteenth Circle

Wild Sense: For 3 Strain, the adept may make a Beast Weaving Test, comparing it to the Spell Defense of all animals within 200 yards of him. He becomes vaguely aware of the locations of all animals whose Spell Defense is not higher than his Test result. He may perceive through the senses of any of these animals, switching between any of them and his own senses at will. Wild Sense lasts for 10 minutes.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Scent Identifier

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Venom

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Astral Web

the broken bond by performing a Deed of Atonement. He might confess to other Beastmasters what he has done, rescue animals he has sold into slavery, or nurse an animal wounded on his behalf or as a result of his deceit.

Rituals of Advancement

Beastmasters do not observe formal advancement rituals. To gain recognition of their advancement to higher Discipline circles, an adept usually displays an increased understanding of the natural world. The adept customarily devises these demonstrations herself.

Recruitment: Adepts recruit new members into this Discipline in a haphazard fashion. For example, ordinary Namegivers in life-or-death situations involving animals (facing a ferocious tiger, stranded with only a dog for a companion) sometimes undergo "spontaneous initiation" into the Discipline as a matter of survival.

Novice (2–4): The adept demonstrates the ability to communicate with a wide variety of creatures.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept successfully calls many creatures to execute a single task. Impractical but dramatic events may enhance the adept's prestige. A legendary example of an advancement ritual describes the ork Beastmaster Hulgrin luring a forest full of beasts to Vivane's town square and persuading them to lick the faces of every citizen present.

Warden (9–12): Adepts of these Circles test their own talents to satisfy themselves.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Beastmaster must meditate alone in the wilderness at night while sitting in a circle drawn around him. As animals and birds arrive to commune with him, the adept asks them to seek the desired ghost master. They fan out into the wilderness. After an hour, the ghost master appears and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Discipline Combinations

The Disciplines most likely to appeal to a Beastmaster are the Cavalryman, Scout, and Warrior, each of which shares at least some Beastmaster talents, or emphasize a relationship with animals or the natural world.

Other Disciplines traditionally require the adept to focus energy and attention on a single aspect of her personality, instead of mastering her whole self. Spellcasting Disciplines in particular rarely appeal to Beastmasters as a second Discipline because of their emphasis on manipulating magic and book learning.

CHAPTER SIX

THE DARING AND DAUNTLESS CAVALRYMAN

This treatise on the Cavalryman Discipline I transcribed from the words of Jenna Kinkeeper, a human from the hinterlands. For all the hours we spoke together, she leaned against and petted her fine black horse, Caliph—whom she insisted on introducing at the start, as one might introduce a fellow Namegiver. This, more than anything else, gave me insight as to how Cavalrymen regard their animals.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

A Cavalryman lives for her mount, and her mount lives for her. We ride in the teeth of the wind; we eat, sleep, and wake part of another's existence. We are closer than mother and daughter, wife and husband; our fates are entwined in a way no one else can truly understand. Only when a mount chooses you and you accept can you truly understand what it is to live joyously in this world.

I have been a Cavalryman since the moment I drew breath, though it took me my first fifteen years to realize it. Throughout my life I have ridden with Cavalrymen of all races and know we are among the bravest and most loyal souls roaming this battered land. Were we not, our mounts would not love us so nor would we know the unequaled joy of their friendship.

THE WORLD OF THE CAVALRYMAN

An ancient saying among Cavalrymen goes, "every foal is born of a mare, and every mare was once a foal." Aged Cavalrymen often speak thus to their young charges about what it is to be an adept. Though such sayings do little to ease the joyous bewilderment of a youth who has just experienced her first Ceremony of Joining, the truth of these pearls of wisdom cannot be denied. No one can become a Cavalryman unless she possesses a natural empathy with animals and a need for motion that goes gut-deep. But the bond between rider and mount grows with learning, and as it grows it colors the Cavalryman's view of the world.

Caliph and I have known our bonding for eleven turns of the seasons now, ever since she was a spindly-legged foal who chose me as her rider, and I see the world as much through her eyes as through my own.

ON THE BOND BETWEEN MOUNT AND RIDER

We Cavalrymen see the world the Scourge has left us in a way few others can. The Air Sailor in her flying ship, perhaps, might understand what we mean when we say that the world is meant to be traveled. Life is meant for movement, for discovery, for the rhythm of hooves fading into the distance as a rider and her horse canter over the horizon. Floating a-horseback across the land, your senses sharp and alive, you touch the world with eye and ear and nose and skin, yet feel gloriously apart. Time has stopped for you and your mount, and it seems your ride will never end.

Why stay in one place for any length of time, when you can feel the wind tugging at your hair like a playful child as you bend over your mount's neck? Why stand still, when your horse's heart and yours blend together like your hair with her mane, together in perfect agreement as the world flows by around you? Even now, I can feel the tugging at my heart. Caliph and I would go and race the wind, had I not so much more yet to tell. But Caliph knows my mind, and will wait for me.

Though I cannot scent the wind as Caliph can, and she cannot grasp a pen in her hoof, we each understand something of the world as each of us experiences it. Scent, sound, and sight combine in our experience of the world, making it far more brilliant and vivid—we sense the world from two different and sometimes confusing perspectives at once. Experienced Cavalrymen learn to deal with this, and find it as easy as riding and shooting a bow at the same time. Our mount's perceptions join with our own just below the surface of our thoughts; we need only open our hearts to see through different eyes.

ON THE LIMITS OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

Our universe is a wild and uncertain place, like a hurricane surrounding an island of perfect trust and understanding. This island is the partnership between horse and rider. Outside stands the rest of the chaotic, chancy, often dangerous world; within, all is peace and pure intimacy. Though a Cavalryman can make friends and take lovers like any other Namegivers, no tie ever becomes as important t0 us as the bond between rider and mount. Now you know, scholar-scribe, why so few Cavalrymen marry; very few husbands or wives are willing to play second-best saddle to a horse! Only another Cavalryman truly understands how we feel, and so many of us seek companionship in the arms of others of

our kind. That way, we need not feel torn between the affection of lover for lover and our over-riding loyalty to our mounts. Both adepts know and accept the limits of their lover's bond.

A Cavalryman makes close and true friends, others by whose side we can rid our battle-scarred world of Horrors and other unimaginable evils. Though we can fight and laugh and sleep side by side with others of our own, two-legged kind, no one can touch our innermost souls save our mounts.

Most of us find the prospect of going through life without a partner whose heart and mind are as open to us as our own souls a terrifying—even horrifying—thought. The constant flow of affection between horse and rider simply outshines all other attachments, and Cavalrymen would have it no other way. So the next time a Cavalryman suddenly loses interest in your latest Theran joke, don't believe him contemptuous or arrogant. He feels no such thing toward you; you are simply less interesting to him than his horse.

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Though Jenna barely makes mention of it, the reader should be aware that many Cavalrymen choose mounts other than horses. It is true that most humans, elves, and orks choose horses as their partners, but few horses can comfortably carry a troll rider, while windlings ride mounts better suited to their tiny size. Also, many orks, especially among the scorcher tribes, choose massive thundra beasts as partners. It is a minor point to be sure, but one worthy of making if this treatise is to be considered any form of authoritative information about the Cavalryman Discipline.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

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On Life in a Cavalry

Though the love between each horse and her rider sustains a Cavalryman throughout her life, few of us live only in the company of our steeds. Almost all Cavalrymen join regiments, troops or other cavalry bands. The ork scorchers are particularly well known for their crack cavalries whose diverse members can act as one better than any other group in Barsaive. Certainly no Theran whip elicits such unity among them.

We join our fellow Cavalrymen because we and our horses wish to. Horses are herd animals, and enjoy each other's company as much as do Barsaive's Namegiver races.

Most cavalry troops are led by a "captain's pair:' the rider and mount who command the greatest respect from the greatest number. The captain's pair chooses aides, who each command a number of cavalry pairs beneath them. The manner of choosing leadership and position within the ranks varies greatly from band to band, but both horses and riders have a say in such decisions, and the abilities of each pair when working together are given great weight. Often, Cavalrymen advance through individual challenges, in which two pairs compete in races, battles and other tests of skill. Most battles are fought with blunted weapons, though I have heard that ork scorchers prefer challenges to the death.

Though Cavalrymen rarely practice a second Discipline, many devote themselves to a specific aspect of our Discipline. Many cavalries are made up almost solely of those we call soldiers, who devote themselves to the arts of war. Certain bands, most notably the windling Aisling Cavalry, so justly famed for their amazing speed and endurance, serve as messengers and couriers.

Messenger cavalries tend to be much smaller than soldiering troops and usually include a number of what we call horsemen, Cavalrymen who pursue riding skills and talents to the near exclusion of all else. A few Cavalrymen also become Beastmaster adepts. Such pairs have an unmatched ability to work together, and so can make their way safely through almost any territory.

On Daily Practices

A Cavalryman's life revolves around her horse, and the horse's around the Cavalryman. Nothing is as important to a Cavalryman as caring for her mount, and she will see to her mount's comfort even before breaking her fast. The Cavalryman feeds her horse, brushes and curries it, then checks its legs for splints and its hooves for signs of thrush, stone bruises or other problems. A Cavalryman can often sense if her mount is in pain or gravely ill; some troubles can be insidious, and so it pays to be cautious. A mount's legs and hooves must be well cared for, because a horse whose leg

or hoof is seriously injured may never recover. To lose a mount is the worst nightmare a Cavalryman can imagine. I know; I have lived through that agony.

Unless a cavalry band is on active service, each pair spends the day rehearsing battle moves, riding maneuvers and other important skills. Cavalrymen on active duty do whatever is required of them; patrolling the outskirts of cities or towns, watching for trouble in city streets, carrying messages, or even fighting—though battle has become rarer since the end of the Theran War. In all such activities, the Cavalryman must give constant attention to strengthening the link between the spirits of rider and horse. At the end of the day, when mount and rider retire to rest, they often sleep together. All Cavalrymen sleep beside their mounts when traveling, and many Cavalrymen prefer to sleep in the stables of an inn rather than leave their mount alone in a strange place. Sleeping with my horse comforts both my body and my mind; my steed's warmth and strength enfold me, and the musky scent of horse lulls me to sleep in my soft hay-nest as surely as any lullaby.

On Becoming a Cavalryman

With every new foal born, a new Joining can begin. As they travel, Cavalrymen keep a constant watch for riding animals near to giving birth. When they spot a likely mount, they often arrange to stay near the pregnant animal until the birth of the offspring, and spend much of the time while they wait searching for Cavalrymen candidates. When the foal is born, the Cavalryman spends a day with the newborn animal, stroking its rough coat and whispering tales of glory and valor in its ears, all the while concentrating her thoughts on the potential adepts she identified earlier. If no one responds to this call, we accept that this youngling was not meant to be a mount and move on.

If someone responds to the miracle of this birth, they will approach the foal before another sun sets. If the foal seems as drawn to the adept candidate as the candidate to the foal, and even if the potential adept does not realize why she has come, the Cavalryman then offers to train the foal as a mount for the candidate. If the candidate accepts this offer, she immediately becomes an apprentice Cavalryman, or else pledges to return in two or three years when the mount has matured. The dispute as to which method produces the better adept goes on as fiercely among us as ever, though never so bitterly as disputes among adherents of some other Disciplines.

Most Cavalrymen I know believe that any new bond that is truly forged will be strong enough to bring horse and rider together at the proper time, regardless of how many months or years they spend apart. Riders of this gait see separation as good and necessary, so that each member of the pair-to-be can know himself better before becoming so intimately bound up with another. Other Cavalryman believe just as strongly that the apprentice rider and foal should not be parted once they have bonded, however tentatively. They say that continuous company and shared experiences strengthen the bond between horse and rider, and make them truly one as no other kind of training can.

Regardless of the method, the official Rite of Joining cannot be performed until the foal has lived thirty months. Though every cavalry has its own ways of performing this sacred ritual, its core remains the same from band to band. From the pair's teacher and mount, the newly bonded horse and rider each receive a mark of joining. Though derived by custom from the mark worn by the teaching pair, it is always different enough so that each mark is as unique as the pair it binds. The mark may be branded on the new pair with fire, or tattooed, or the teacher may cut the flesh and rub dirt into the cut to form a raised scar. I have heard that ork scorchers favor the last method. Once adorned with this symbol of the Cavalryman's bond, the rider leaps onto his mount's back for the first time. As the two gallop together in joy, the rider silently Names

their partnership. This Naming cements the budding heart-bond between the two of them. No Cavalryman tells another this Name, and to ask it is a deadly insult.

On Bonding More Than Once

Death is part of life in Barsaive, more so now than in the times before the Scourge came to trouble us. Often, the dangers of our world leave one member of a bonded pair—most often the Cavalryman—to grieve for her slain companion. The survivor of a pair sundered by death, whether horse or rider, may bond again, though no Cavalryman can bond with more than one mount at a time. Such a thing would be a travesty; it would be like a king owing his whole loyalty to more than one realm, or a husband giving all his heart to more than one wife. None among us has discovered precisely why, but it is far rarer for a horse to bond again than for a rider to do so. All too often, a horse whose rider dies simply refuses to eat or drink, disappearing into the wilderness to die rather than going on without his bondmate.

Of all the Namegiver races, humans like myself recover most swiftly from the worst depths of our grief to form another bond. Some claim this is so because humans are more versatile than others; I believe we are simply stronger of mind. Trolls are the least likely to find another mount, partly because their notions of honor are tangled with the pair-bond and partly because it is no easy task to find a mount suitable to their size. Regardless, no Cavalryman of any race ever completely sets aside her sense of loss. We always remember our mounts, and miss them as a mother misses her departed children. Some Cavalrymen never recover from the shock of losing a mount, particularly if they feel somehow to blame for the horse's death. Such unending despair is a hazard of our Discipline. Because a Cavalryman's horse lives at most to the age of twenty-two years or so, and other mounts often less, all Cavalrymen know they will face a mount's death at least once in their lives. To know this and still enter the Discipline is a true feat of courage.

Of the Rite of the Hero

The end that Cavalrymen dread more than a mount's clean death in battle or the gentle passing that comes with age is a broken leg.

Not even magical healing can make the bone as strong as it once was, and no horse cares to live on three legs. A horse that can never gallop again knows only a life of agony. We Cavalrymen have a duty to our mounts if they are injured so grievously that life will become unbearable for them. If in battle or accident a horse suffers a crippling, but not fatal wound, the Cavalryman must perform the Rite of the Hero. To leave your mount alive and suffering rather than face this awful and solemn responsibility is the single greatest shame that can befall a Cavalryman. Horses can sense such shame, and an adept who so disgraces herself will never find another horse willing to accept her after such a betrayal. I have heard the few scattered stories of Zena of Throal, a dwarf Cavalryman who redeemed herself in the eyes of the mountain ponies through a series of heroic trials, but this ancient tale cannot possibly have any truth in it.

The rite is simple and stark, as befits such a somber occasion. The adept cradles her wounded mount's head in her lap, and they meditate together on their bond-Name and all that it has grown to encompass. When both feel ready, the Cavalryman slices her mount's neck, then touches her dying mount's blood to the marks of their joining. As the mount dies, the joining brand fades (though it never fades entirely). I performed this rite for my first mount, Dancer, who gave his life fighting shadowmants in the Thunder Mountains. I felt the bond between us slip slowly, torturously, out of my grasp, as a lifeline slips out of the weakening grip of a drowning sailor. The quick shock of death in battle is as nothing by comparison. Yet it was my duty to face this pain, and I dispatched my mount to the comfort of death as I had sworn to do. Any true Cavalryman would do as much, no matter what it cost her.

Of Honor Braids

This braid I wear honors the memory of my departed mount. Pay special respect to any Cavalryman you see wearing such an honor braid, for he has suffered a trial beyond any that you have ever experienced. Three sections of hair taken from the mount's tail are intertwined with three sections of the rider's hair to make an honor braid, and no rider will ever unbraid it. Sometimes, but only in the most dire circumstances, a Cavalryman will sacrifice her honor braid by cutting it off and casting it into a fire. By doing this before or during a great quest or battle, the Cavalryman may gain extra strength to face the challenge. Yet this act causes the adept such anguish that it is only done as a sign that a Cavalryman will give more than her life for the cause at hand. A dishonored adept may not wear an honor braid, and as a symbol of her disgrace it is shorn from her head.

On the Training of a Cavalryman

Every teacher of young Cavalrymen has her own way of training, but all teachers I know of teach the fledgling adept to ride first without bridle and saddle. Those things come later. Even after training, most Cavalrymen I know eschew such ungainly items as saddles and bridles; all the straps and reins and such that other riders find so indispensable only interfere with the bond between rider and horse. There is no need for a guiding rein when you need only open your heart to tell the horse where to go; the subtle pressure of thigh or knee to withers or flank is all we need to direct our mount.

No Cavalryman's mount will ever suffer a bit between her teeth—and woe to the fingers of whoever attempts to put one in her mouth!

No fighting Cavalryman should discount stirrups. Having a leather strap against which to brace your feet helps a rider stay on his mount's back in the thick of battle, where a sharp plunge or a quick turn at the wrong moment can toss you right onto someone's sword. I tie a simple girth-band around my mount's belly, and the stirrups dangle from that. Peloquin fights better, too—he doesn't worry so much about throwing me to my death.

—Gether of the Red Plains Riders

In the beginning, training exercises increase the heart-bond between horse and rider. Games of hide and seek, in which the rider must sense where her horse has gone, are a favorite method of mine. In teaching the two younglings to work together as a team, many teachers blindfold rider and then horse in turn, so that each learns to rely on the senses of the other while in motion. Beginning with simple circles on lead ropes, the young adept learns to use legs, seat, and hands in conjunction with her mind to guide her mount, while the mount learns to send her own thoughts back to the adept. It is a delicate and wondrous time of learning for both!

Most Cavalrymen and their mounts benefit from the bond partly because we complement each other. Both Caliph and my lost Dancer are high-spirited and almost reckless, whereas I am serious-minded and calculating. Our differences cause disagreements at times—as Caliph's snorts testify—but we balance each other's weaknesses admirably.

Once the bond between them is firm, the pair learns more difficult riding and fighting techniques. Fighting skills vary from region to region, race to race, and regiment to regiment. Both horse and rider are always taught to fight; the adept with any one of a number of weapons, and the horse with hooves, teeth, and body. If fierceness can be lyrical, it is so when a Cavalryman and his mount engage in battle. They move together as one, using their weapons in a dance of deadly grace.

After a time, the novice adept can truly enter the ranks of our Discipline by performing a certain Karma ritual. She plants a target in the earth, then gallops away from it in random patterns for several minutes. Then she blindfolds herself and must return to the target, seeing her way solely through her mount's eyes. A new pair who completes this ritual is welcomed by their fellows into the proud First Circle of the Cavalryman Discipline. Moving to higher and higher Circles of accomplishment almost always requires an adept to prove an even stronger heart-bond between horse and rider, because that tie is the linchpin around which all else revolves.

Of Soldiers and Horsemen

Certain Cavalrymen choose to set aside certain facets of the Discipline in order to hone other skills to the finest possible point. Many Cavalrymen feel such limited focus is unwise, but plenty take up the most common specialties of soldier and horseman.

The soldier and his mount study the arts of warfare to the exclusion of all else. A well-trained soldier pair is one of the most deadly foes an enemy will ever face. Because battle fills their souls and leaves no time for other learning, the soldier pair may fall short in riding skills not used in battle. The partners also risk succumbing to battle lust, each feeding off the other's frenzy. Such berserkers can endanger friend and foe alike until the battle fever fades.

As the soldier eschews certain particularly tricky riding skills, so the horseman forgoes the arts of war in order to ride with the greatest skill possible. A horseman and her mount can certainly defend themselves, but the consummate skill with which they move almost as one being sets these pairs apart from other Cavalrymen. Horsemen often take on a second Discipline, almost always that of Scout. These horsemen pairs love to travel and explore; more than do all other heroes, Barsaivians owe to horsemen-Scouts our ever-growing knowledge of our land. They have been where others both long and fear to go, and have brought their knowledge back as a gift.

Well-loved tales told around many a cavalry's campfires concern the ork Yanock the Calloused and his great horse, the Wind. In all versions I have heard, Yanock and the Wind were two of the first beings to emerge from the earth toward the end of the Scourge. Tired of living trapped within their kaer's walls, the two agreed to journey for nine days toward each of the four winds. If they survived, they would report to the kaer that the end of the Scourge had come. The adventures of Yanock and the Wind during their journeys have spawned legends more numerous than the hairs of a horse's mane, but in the end they return triumphant to their kaer.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Game Information

Death of a Mount

The death of a Cavalryman's mount is very serious for the adept. The Cavalryman suffers a –2 penalty to his Talent Tests until he successfully bonds with a new mount, except for tests made to acquire, bond to, or train that mount. This penalty is equivalent to that for a Serious talent crisis.

Effects of Honor Braids

An adept who performs the Rite of the Hero for a fallen mount may wear an honor braid (see **Of Honor Braids**, p.88). A player character should record his current Cavalryman Discipline Circle when noting the honor braid on his Character Record Sheet.

For each honor braid an adept wears, add +1 to his Social Defense when dealing with other Cavalrymen. An adept who cuts off and burns an honor braid to gain power for some heroic purpose (saving a kaer, fighting a Horror, and so on) gains a number of Karma Points equal to his Discipline Circle at the time of that mount's death. These Karma Points do not count against the adept's Maximum Karma Points, but must be used in the adventure or quest that prompted the Cavalryman to burn the braid. Unused Karma Points are lost. Once burned, the honor braid cannot be replaced.

Roleplaying Hints

Cavalrymen are generally a restless lot, driven by the need to move and act. A Cavalryman will rarely walk when he can gallop; he often charges into every situation and faces foes head on.

Unlike most adepts, who typically concentrate only on their own abilities, the Cavalryman is intimately bound to his mount. Even when physically separated, the two maintain a unique empathic bond. A Cavalryman's bond with his mount affects him mentally, emotionally, and physically. Because his mount is more important to him than any other being, the Cavalryman tends to keep a certain emotional distance from other people. For this reason, other Namegivers often see Cavalrymen as rude, brusque, or even a little brainless.

A Cavalryman's true brilliance and heroism most often shines while working in tandem with his mount. A mounted Cavalryman draws on the strength, will, and senses of two beings. The Cavalryman who seems shy and taciturn often startles his companions by making a dramatic personality change when working with his mount. While a Cavalryman does not usually find it difficult to work with other Namegivers, he often seems a bit odd to all but Beastmasters, who understand a little of these adepts' unique partnership with their mounts.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Call Mount, Down Strike, Incite Stampede, Lion Heart, Rally, Safe Path, Tiger Spring, Trample

Ninth Circle

Gait Mastery: Taking 2 Strain, the adept can magically lower or raise his mount's base Movement Rate by half.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Critical Hit

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Unmount

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Tame Mount

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Life Check

Master

Talent Options: Bestial Toughness, Champion Challenge, Develop Animal Sense, Lion Spirit, Second Chance, Spirit Strike

Thirteenth Circle

Resurrect Mount: By touching it, the adept can resurrect a mount he has ridden that has been dead for less than a week. The adept suffers 1 Permanent Damage Point and the mount is restored to full health, free of any Damage or Wounds.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Shield Beater

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +2 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Vitality

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Multi-Charge

Discipline Violations

Because the bond between a Cavalryman and his mount is so central to the Discipline, anything that diminishes its importance may trigger a talent crisis. A cavalryman who neglects his mount may suffer a talent crisis, the severity of which depends on how serious the neglect was. The longer the neglect continues, the more serious the crisis will become, until the bond between horse and rider is damaged so severely only a Deed of Atonement will restore it.

A Cavalryman may also trigger a talent crisis by valuing another Namegiver over his mount. An infatuation or other distraction with another Namegiver can weaken or even shatter the adept's empathic bond with his mount and harmony with his Discipline.

A Cavalryman who does not perform the Rite of the Hero for his mortally wounded mount (see **Of The Rite of the Hero**, p.87) is guilty of a Heinous Discipline violation. Only a Deed of Atonement, such as an epic quest to honor his fallen mount, will make such an adept acceptable to another mount.

Rituals of Advancement

Many Cavalryman adepts belong to companies organized as military units, called cavalries, or are members of nomadic or scorcher tribes. These units traditionally recognize an adept's advancement with ceremony and promotion. Player characters and other unaffiliated Cavalrymen tend to follow less formal guidelines.

Recruitment: When an adept's mount either sires or births a foal, the adept meditates at the birthing, then spends a point of Karma. If within a day someone will arrive to visit the newborn foal. If the foal likes the newcomer, the Cavalryman offers to train the animal as a mount and, when the mount grows old enough, recruit the visitor into the Discipline. Cavalrymen that are part of an organization often look out for non-adept members displaying a connection to, rather than simple skill with, a mount.

Novice (2–4): The adept displays his skill at horsemanship by performing trick maneuvers while mounted, or feats of trick riding.

Journeyman (5–8): Accompanied by an elder, the adept rides blindfolded to an unknown destination, at least half a day's ride away, then returns to the starting point, still blindfolded. The adept then describes the destination to the elder, as seen through his mount's eyes.

Warden (9–12): A fellow Cavalryman rides for one hour in a randomly chosen direction, leading the adept's mount. At the end of the hour, the adept spends a point of Karma then sets out walking with a confident gait. When the adept finds the mount, the ritual is complete.

Ghost Master Ritual: The adept rides into the wilderness at night. After an hour of riding he makes a Ghost Master Ritual Test, at which point he sees a dimly lit figure galloping away in the darkness. If successful, he pursues and catches the ghost master and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Discipline Combinations

While few Cavalrymen adopt multiple Disciplines, the Beastmaster/Cavalryman combination is the most common because both Disciplines emphasize empathic abilities and concern for animals. The Scout and Warrior Disciplines mesh well with the Cavalryman's aggressive instincts and desire for motion.

Cavalrymen almost never become Air Sailors, Elementalists, Sky Raiders, or Nethermancers. The Air Sailor and Sky Raider are divorced from the land the Cavalryman loves, while the Nethermancer and Elementalist separate themselves too much from the emotional, living world in order to pursue their Disciplines. These conditions would make it virtually impossible to maintain the Cavalryman's empathic bond with his mount.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTALIST

As a practitioner of the Discipline of Wizardry, I took particular interest in the essays of those whose Disciplines have the most in common with my own. Or perhaps I should say, those I believed to have the most in common. I have since learned, as the following essay from Jedran the troll will attest, that the differences in world-view between the Wizard and the Elementalist, Illusionist and Nethermancer, are far more striking than I had expected.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

As a cranky old troll with a bad back, I've little patience for wasting time with flowery words. You want frills and lace about the world, about magic, go to an Illusionist. They'll tell you whatever you want to hear and do it up in all colors of the rainbow.

Me, I'm for plain speaking. I've been an Elementalist for more years than my old back cares to remember, and I see straight to the core truths in things. Almost can't help it, these days. Don't ask me what I see in you, scholar. You won't like it.

Most people, even trolls, don't take enough time to look to the heart of matters. When you boil all the world down to what's what, every single thing in it is made up of the five elements.

Oh, but I'm flesh and blood, you're thinking—or stone, for any obsidimen feeling left out of this lecture—and what in Scarrin's Horns does wood, air, fire, water and earth have to do with flesh and blood? Plenty. You have water in your blood, earth in your bones, air in your lungs, fire in your heart, and wood in your spine. Not literally, of course, but it's there just the same. If you were an Elementalist, you'd understand that. But you're not. So bend your ears my way, scholar, because old Jedran's going to tell you what it's like to know the elements in your heart and mind as well as your bones.

HOW THE ELEMENTALIST SEES THE WORLD

Most folk see the world as a blurred jumble of sights and sounds, tastes and smells. They sense a hundred thousand things in a hundred thousand ways and label them all "different," without understanding that there really isn't all that much difference between any of them. Elementalists see the world much more clearly. When we look at plants and people, stones and flowers, we see the five elements of the Universe. Everything in this world of ours is created from the five elements. Everything. Now, some things are made up of only one element, some of two, some of all five, but every blessed thing holds its own piece of the Universe's building blocks. Even the foul Horrors that came near to destroying our world contain something of the elements, twisted though that something is! Don't give me that shocked look, scholar. Don't like the notion that Namegivers share anything with Horrors? Well, get used to it, because it's true. No sense hiding from truth just because it's unpleasant. If you try, it'll come back to bite you.

When an Elementalist like me looks at the world, he sees the elements in action. When we smell flowers or gaze at a rock formation, we're not just resting our eyes on something pleasing. We're watching how the air moves the pollen, or contemplating the pattern of the stone's growth through the years. Lots of times, we're communing with an elemental spirit, which most Namegivers can't see. No matter what, we're practicing our Discipline.

Do you see what I'm getting at, scholar? Elementalists move through a world of fundamentals. We can't escape the truths of life and death that the elements spell out, and we don't care to try. Leave that to Illusionists and other ostrich-headed folk. If they want to cover their world and their senses in layer after layer of pretense, muffling themselves and others in blankets of deception, they're welcome to it. But to Elementalists, who strive to strip away all sorts of eyewash, the whole idea is repugnant. We won't drown ourselves in drink or get caught up in a magician's tricks. Where's the pleasure in tricking your senses or in shutting them down? How can you see and know the world that way, hmmm?

Elementalists have no need for trickery. Reality is complicated enough, and we love the puzzles it sets us. Go ahead—ask one of your fellow librarians in the Hall of Records to give you every treatise in the library on the nature of reality written by Elementalists. You'll give him heart failure with a demand like that! Certain aspiring Elementalists I know have spent several months on their rumps in the Great Library poring over scrolls and tomes on the nature of a single element. Our curiosity about the world and the nature of reality colors our dealings with ele-

mental spirits, those peculiar beings that live just the other side of most people's "reality." I'll speak more of them later—but not until I'm sure you've got at least some of the essentials.

I can't say life as an Elementalist is easy. But we know just how important we are to Barsaive and we won't leave our task to be done by anyone else. Because Elementalists are the only Namegivers who are always aware of reality's true nature, we are also the only ones who can do anything with the five elements from which the entire world is built (and the only ones who can keep an eye on them). We're the ones who deal with the elemental spirits, most of whom care little for Namegivers or anything that distracts them from striving for more power for their own element. We do these things for a vital purpose: maintaining the balance between elements in our world. No Namegiver could exist without the presence of all five elements, and the nature of reality will warp if we ever let the balance veer too much in any one direction.

And another thing. During the Scourge, kaers with copies of the Book of Tomorrow knew to place a ball of True earth over a bowl of True water, so that when the two touched and turned to mud they'd know the level of magic in the world had fallen low enough to end the Scourge. Well, we all know the level of magic has held steady at just above that mark, and even we Elementalists don't completely understand why. But because the balance of elements must hold the key to answering this question, every Elementalist takes it as his duty to learn more about elemental balance and its meaning for Barsaive.

We practice our Discipline nearly every waking moment, and we must regularly speak with the elemental spirits. Not an easy thing, scholar, to switch from communicating with spirits to talking with other Namegivers. I'm telling you now why Elementalists seem so odd to ignorant folk. When we talk to the air, stick our hands in the fire, or blurt out bits of what sounds like nonsense, our actions make perfect sense to us in our dual awareness of spirit and flesh. Just as orichalcum is the inanimate manifestation of the elements in balance, so are we its living manifestation.

We use the symbol of the five-pointed star, which represents a perfect balance among the five elements, to remind ourselves to honor all the elements to keep our world safe. So that we are consciously aware of the importance of balance (it is always prominent in our hearts), we use the five-pointed star in many of our rituals, speak of it in our proverbs, even embroider it on our robes. Watch for Elementalists wearing and using distorted or misshapen stars, though. They may signal a Horror's taint.

On the Need for Balance

Our world requires the elements to remain in balance, lest the nature of reality change. Some of my fellows tell me that the balance of the five elements somehow affects the ebb and flow of magic. If so, the key to lessening or even preventing another Scourge may well belong to a lock within the Elementalist's grasp. Now there's a notion, eh, scholar? Keeping a balance among the five elements sometimes gets difficult. In order to work our magic best, we need the aid of different elemental spirits, and each of them wants us to favor its element in exchange for its help! I've lost count of how many times an air elemental has demanded that I not cast any earth spells for a year and a day, or a wood elemental insisted that I cease casting fire spells. But if I agree to these demands, I stop balancing my use of elemental magics. And then I'm in sore trouble.

Whenever an Elementalist adept favors weaving the spells of any one element, or stops weaving one element's spells, the balance within his own spirit tips out of whack. If the imbalance becomes critical enough, the adept may even lose the knack of using certain elements in his spells! An adept who favors or ignores one element too much will suffer the consequences. I knew a young windling adept who favored air spells above all others, and rarely honored fire magic. Soon, the poor little wisp of a thing could only think clearly while in flight, and he lost all the energy and passion that fire brings to life. He was constantly exhausted and depressed, and ceased to care much about anything. Lucky for him, he managed to re-balance himself over a period of several months, but the effort cost him most of his remaining strength.

Now that you bring it to mind, there is one curious exception to all that. Elementalists who openly acknowledge favoritism toward a certain element don't suffer for it as others of us do, though they have their own peculiarities. I'll speak more of that later.

I can tell by your face that you don't understand why an unbalanced Elementalist is so bad for anyone except the poor fool himself. Well, I'll tell you. We have a saying: "As the Elementalist goes, so goes the world." Ever hear of the Great Mountain, or the Great Tree? Those are symbols we commonly use to describe and represent the world. As a troll, I prefer the Great Mountain, though

elves and humans and the lizard-men prefer the Tree symbol. I'll give you both, as I can't guess what ragtag assortment of folk will end up reading this. Don't want anyone to feel left out, after all, though I doubt most of you bookish types and paper shufflers will understand half of what I've said. The Great Mountain has its stony roots in the earth, its slopes bear wood and the water of a thousand cold streams, its peak is air, and its heart is fire. The Great Tree also has roots of earth, a trunk of wood, branches of fire, and leaves of smoke—that's air, for the ignorant—and the water of life runs through every vein of it. All the elements are there, scholar—all of them, in perfect balance, make up the fabric of reality. Throw off that balance and you've got trouble worse than a Horror breathing its foul stench on the back of your neck! And because we Elementalists live so close to the heart of reality, and strengthen or weaken the elements by our actions, an unbalanced Elementalist means an unbalanced part of the Great Mountain.

I've seen it happen myself. Some silly fool of a novice Elementalist came close to washing Urupa into the Aras Sea because he didn't know enough about what he was doing. An elf, he was, who loved water best of all the elements. He also loved greenery, and thought it a crying shame that all Barsaive wasn't covered in trees and underbrush and whatnot. He happened to be traveling in the arid lands between Urupa and the Thunder Mountains, the part just before you run into the lush delta country, and he decided to grow an oak forest for some local villagers because it would be pretty. Pretty, of all things! So he cast water spell after water spell, drawing on the water of the Serpent River and far-away Lake Ban. He got armies of delighted water elementals to make rainstorm after rainstorm for him, until the land near the village was awash in water. The oak seedlings sprouted, sure enough—but he'd thrown the balance of elements in the region so far off kilter that the storms wouldn't stop. The river and lake waters grew higher and higher, and the terrible floods all but drowned the delta near Urupa. There was water up to my waist in most of the city's streets that year. Silly fool drowned most of the village's crops, too, which consisted of local plants that thrived on the meager water they customarily received. And what did he leave them with? A fine stand of completely inedible young oak trees! You see the trouble caused by imbalance?

Of Elemental Spirits

Contrary to the belief of any number of ignoramuses wandering around Barsaive, elemental spirits are not simpleminded, easily bullied serfs who come running at the beck and call of any wet-behind-the-ears novice Elementalist. Elemental spirits are extraordinarily independent beings, and I've never met a single one who thought itself inferior to Namegivers. Truth be told, I've had more than a few arguments with spirits who claim that we Namegivers are confused and pathetic creatures whose patterns are all mucked up in a wild mishmash of elements we don't understand. The antics of certain of my children lend weight to such assertions, but I see both viewpoints as mistaken. We Namegivers are not superior to elemental spirits just because we're complicated beings, nor are they superior to us by virtue of their simplicity.

The second mistake most often made about elemental spirits is the variety in existence. There are a lot more than the five or six everyone may think they know—hundreds of them share our world with us. The most common are spirits of earth, air, fire, water and wood, but I've also met flower spirits, mud spirits and hearth spirits, to name just a few. And I've read or heard of hundreds more.

Elementalists treat with these spirits, even making friends of them on occasion. Dealing with them successfully, though, is much more difficult than most of you ignorant folk realize. We can see straight to the heart of reality, but we don't live there. Elemental spirits do. The reality they understand and the one we understand are two different places, and sometimes that gets in the way. Many a time, a simple misunderstanding by an Elementalist or a spirit sends the spirit off in a snit before we've even finished talking to it.

Each type of element, and each spirit, has its own peculiarities. An Elementalist needs to keep firmly in mind that most elemental spirits *want* to aid us in our magical workings, because our efforts often extend the spirit's influence in the world. Even a hint of arrogance in our behavior, however, makes these proud beings angry. They've a sense of personal honor touchier than a troll's and that's saying something! So we hammer it into every apprentice's brain that he must respect the spirits, no matter how they act in return! "He did it first" is no excuse for making an elemental spirit your enemy, and possibly upsetting the balance into the bargain.

Elemental spirits want us to increase their particular element because the amount of a given element in existence gives the spirits of that element more power. Fortunately, some powerful spirits with a larger view of things act as a counterweight to the narrower-sighted ones, striving to keep the elements in balance as the others strive to dominate through their own element. You're looking confused, scholar, but that's my best explanation. Seems perfectly clear to me. And because you said you didn't want this becoming a magical-theory tome, I suggest you ferret out *Of Elemental Balance*. Nice piece of work, that.

No Elementalist worth his salt, sweat, breath, or passion goes long without weaving the power of the elements into spells. Each element has its own nature, which the Elementalist must know in his bones if he's to use the magic at all. We learn to know each element by channeling its energy through our own bodies, because the body remembers better than the mind! (And my apprentices wonder why my old back hurts so much! Humph.)

Remember too, that many spells are woven of two or more elements. To wield them properly, the Elementalist must understand each element involved. When I cast Plant Talk, I know that the element of wood is present in the plant's strength, and that the element of air is present in the plant's and my own speech. Both send their energies through my old bones. Youngsters are too likely to forget such things.

Of Working with Earth

Catching the attention of earth spirits requires deep meditation, because these beings communicate at the roots of our own awareness. They also think slowly, compared to most Namegivers save obsidimen. Achieving that slowness of mind is a difficult trick for young adepts especially, because they're so easily distracted. Urgent needs are hardest to convey to the earth spirit, because urgency and slowness just don't mix. In truth, many Namegivers find it difficult to think at all while in deep trance, though obsidimen have a real knack for it.

When casting with earth, the Elementalist must draw upon heart and bone. Your mind must be as implacable and unchanging as earth while you weave the element through your body. If you falter or change your intent while wielding earth spells, the threads of your spell may well shift away from you like dust in the wind.

Of Working with Air

Air spirits are light-minded, intelligent, and as changeable as spring breezes. One minute they love you like a brother, the next they're convinced you mean to betray them. Patience and clear speaking are needed when dealing with these spirits, as is a sense of humor. Air spirits also enjoy strange jokes, and often practice them on their Elementalist friends. Windlings have what might be considered an affinity for air spirits, being of like temperament.

Ah, but a windling is not so fickle.
—**Keohrt, Windling Elementalist**

Funny enough, air is the element of communication when used in spells. Casting an air spell is like holding a conversation; you've got to know exactly what you want to say, but you've also got to listen sharp and respond to what you hear. The adept must hearken to his own senses and the movements of air through his body in order to weave this element in magic. If you try to grab hold of the air and force its power—shouting, we call it—you'll lose the threads of the spell.

Of Working with Fire

Fire spirits are almost as changeable as air spirits, though less suspicious. The same fire spirit may have far different concerns and even show a far different temperament from one meeting to the next. As spirits made of light, they see farther and faster than other kinds of spirits, and often allow or deny the Elementalist whatever aid he wishes far more quickly. I've never known an Elementalist who successfully lied to or tricked a fire spirit, and I wouldn't care to try.

Passion, hunger, and truth revealed are the first words that come to my mind when I think of the element of fire. I remember what fire's wild energy feels like, and my heart beats harder and faster in anticipation. Intoxicating, that's what it is. Makes you feel warm all over, like a good strong ale. Fire spells are not for the weak-willed, which is why they're a favorite of mine. To wield this element, be single-minded and passionate about what you want. Otherwise, the fire will escape and burn whoever is in its path. I've seen some fools so drunk by the power of fire at their fingertips that they lose control of it and harm themselves or their friends. Luckily, such lapses are rare.

Of Working with Water

Spirits of water are less like each other than any other kind of spirit. I've dealt with no small number of them over the years, and I still wonder what sort of a creature I'm going to encounter every time. The only constant I've ever noticed among water spirits is their unwavering confidence. Other Elementalists of my acquaintance tell me that water elementals hold back more and bargain more shrewdly than other elementals. They seem to particularly love t'skrang, for obvious reasons.

Every Elementalist must find his own way to wield this ever-shifting element. An old t'skrang colleague of mine speaks of the "everchanging changelessness" of water spells, and I think she's got the right of it. Water is a paradox, always changing but always the same. The best advice I can give for casting water spells is to work from your heart, open yourself to the water flowing through your veins, and to flow with whatever emotions or thoughts fill your empty self with each casting. Look within, and find your own answer.

Of Working with Wood

Wood spirits vary from tree to tree. I prefer oak spirits because their solid strength reminds me of my own people, but that's my bias. Wood elementals are the most bound to the world of we Namegivers, and so bespeaking one isn't all that different from talking to an elf or a t'skrang or a human. Wood spirits drive the hardest bargains, though. They're as unyielding as their element can be. Unless an Elementalist can prove that his actions will somehow aid the wood elemental, it is almost impossible to get help from the pesky thing without promising to do it a service. I know one young Elementalist, desperate for a wood spirit's aid, who spent the next year and a day planting acorns and other nuts! And yes, wood spirits do seem to prefer working with elves. As to blood elves and wood elementals, some claim the wood spirits prefer these twisted excuses for Namegivers. Others say most wood and other elementals refuse to deal with the thorn-pierced ones.

Wood is the stuff of growth and life. When an Elementalist stands near young saplings in the spring, he should feel their exuberant growth as surely as he feels his heartbeat. When casting spells with wood, remember growth and the goodness of change. An adept who has grown too comfortable with unchanging patterns of thought or action soon loses his touch for casting spells relying on this element.

Of the Place of Orichalcum in the Balance

Orichalcum holds special significance for we Elementalists. This magical substance symbolizes the world in perfect balance. Not for us the worry of you other folk over how much coin a piece of orichalcum or a True element can bring you—we see such things as objects for study, not gain. My children roll their eyes and argue with me every time I bury pieces of orichalcum in the earth or within the bole of a tree, or otherwise "lose" them. I pay them no heed. By such acts, I am honoring one of the elements without which orichalcum could not exist. This practice, which we call "orichalcum tithing," brings us goodwill from the spirits of the element to which we tithe.

Though I have never met one, some adepts are said to attain such amazing skill and understanding in the Discipline that they can bespeak orichalcum spirits. Tremendously powerful, these spirits rarely deign to communicate with any Namegiver. The so-called "orichalcum adept" is honored above all other Elementalists, even those of a higher Circle. They are said to wear an orichalcum pentagram as a mark of their status. As to their specific abilities, none save the orichalcum adepts know what they are.

These so-called orichalcum spirits and orichalcum adepts are the stuff of children's tales! No substantial scholarly information about them exists, and that leads me to doubt their existence. Readers, learn a lesson here. Do not embrace every word that is written.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

On Training an Elementalist

Though we Elementalists tend to be close-mouthed about the details of our Discipline, we always keep an eye out for new recruits. Unlike certain other Disciplines, the Elementalist Discipline doesn't tend to attract hordes of would-be practitioners eager to learn our ways so they can accomplish feats of daring. The Discipline is too subtle for that sort of nonsense. Instead, we watch non-adepts for signs that they respect the elements or are sensitive to their workings. I found my latest apprentice, a young innkeeper's daughter, when she insisted I not travel onward because a fierce storm was coming. She said this even though the skies were as clear as a mountain spring. Much to my surprise, the innkeeper actually heeded his daughter's warning, setting his children to close the shutters and lock the animals in the barn. He told me the child had a knack for predicting storms, and I knew right then she was an Elementalist born.

Having set his sights on a potential apprentice, the Elementalist talks to him or her to find out how the apprentice-to-be sees the world and his own affinity for the elements. Weather-sense or some such isn't enough by itself; an apprentice must be able to learn the Discipline. Often, an adept places the would-be apprentice where one or another of the elements clearly holds sway; they go walking in a rainstorm together, or stand near a bonfire. The adept then asks his companion what he sees and feels. If the answers are promising, the adept formally asks the candidate if he wishes to become an apprentice. My young apprentice heard unintelligible whispers and felt a cold breeze in her hair when a storm was coming, so I knew she was well-suited to the Discipline.

The apprentice starts learning at once, thrown into a physically and mentally exhausting array of experiences that will help her sense and understand how the elements work in the world. Along with this, the adept discusses with the apprentice the nature of reality. Gradually, the apprentice learns to see the world through new eyes. She comes to understand the balance between the elements, and how to manipulate them to her advantage without doing the world harm. She also learns about the elemental spirits and the grave consequences of "twisting the pentagram," or purposely working to pull the elements permanently out of line.

Once an apprentice demonstrates sufficient knowledge and ability to reach the First Circle, her most difficult training begins. As we say, 'True learning comes by doing." Elementalist adepts learn a number of techniques and spells that are theirs alone, and so I cannot discuss such things in this essay. Not my secrets to reveal, are they? I can tell you that rituals play a particularly important part in the Elementalist Discipline.

On the Significance of Ritual

Ritual is a private, personal, and very important aspect of any Elementalist's existence. Only ritual can truly open our eyes and minds, and only continued practice of rituals lets us maintain our unique ability to touch both our own world and the realm of the spirits. Rituals are the lenses that allow us to shift our vision from one world to another.

In his Karma ritual, each adept brings each of the elements into his heart and sinews. Boiling water on a fire, mixing the water and earth to make mud, painting the mud on our faces with a wooden stick, and letting the wind dry the mud in patterns, allows us to experience each element in turn. Often, the patterns made by the wind in the drying mud show us patterns of power to embroider on our robes. I have also heard of adepts whose Karma ritual warned them of a temporary but grave imbalance in the local elements, which they were able to keep from becoming permanent. If ever the breeze blows out my fire, or the water in my pot boils over and burns my hand, I will know trouble is nigh.

Elementalists conduct numerous rituals. The simplest to perform (but often the most difficult to set up) are the rituals of Circle advancement. Adepts attempting to reach Fifth Circle and beyond have the greatest trouble, because of the sheer complexity of the task they must accomplish. These Elementalists must demonstrate their power in front of an elder adept and a number of spirits equal to the desired Circle. But the more elemental spirits are present, the more chances there are for disputes among them that can keep the ritual from happening. Innumerable Elementalists have been stymied by feuding elemental spirits, or their own short-sighted treatment of

one. Other difficulties include convincing enough spirits to attend the ritual without too much fuss, and inevitably at least one of them will demand that the Elementalist perform a service for them in exchange. Most Elementalists consider these services part of the Discipline, of course. As long as the elemental does not demand something that might throw off the balance of the elements, these services are of as much value to the adept as to the spirit.

Of Those Who Follow One Element

Given what I've said about the importance of elemental balance, it may surprise readers to learn that some Elementalist adepts confine their studies and workings to only one of the five elements. Granted, most of us frown on such a choice as possibly irresponsible, but it seems that Elementalists who narrow their paths in this way *follow*, rather than cause, shifts in elemental power. For example, water Elementalists seem to crop up by the dozens when water becomes scant. Some of us wonder how long it will be before these single-element practitioners pull the balance awry, but even I have to admit we've discovered no evidence that they'll cause that kind of harm. Why not, I can't imagine—but then, the world has a few secrets from us all.

One who chooses a single element can still cast spells using other elements and can still bespeak the spirits of those elements. However, they lose a certain amount of ability in working with elements other than their chosen preference. In that one, they excel. Though an Elementalist of any race can choose any element, obsidimen tend to prefer earth, windlings air, elves wood, and t'skrang water. Orks, humans, and trolls rarely favor one element over another, though certain Sky Raider clans are thick with air Elementalists. Troll stories say these air Elementalists helped several kaers of Sky Raiders to keep their skills sharp during the Scourge, when the raiders were forced underground along with the rest of us.

On Those Adepts Known as Enchanters

Certain Elementalists follow the path of the enchanter, focusing on manipulating elements physically and magically. Enchanters create magical items whose power and beauty are second to none. They have unsurpassed skill at creating items from one or more True elements, infusing such objects with elemental energies. A number of the magical items in Barsaive were made by enchanters, a fair lot of them humans. Every Namegiver race has its enchanters, but humans seem to like this path best of all. They love things, humans do, especially adornments. Perhaps that explains their enchantment with enchanters! (You're not laughing, scholar. Didn't you like my joke?) Many enchanters also learn the Weaponsmith Discipline, and can create amazingly powerful weapons. Almost all the most famous magical weapons are the work of such adepts.

Game Information

Orichalcum Tithes

If he wishes, an Elementalist can tithe to a particular element by placing an orichalcum coin within the element in question (throwing the coin off a cliff, placing it in a lake, burying it in the earth, and so on). The coin is lost; it cannot be recovered or re-used. If the Elementalist is out of favor with the element, has treated its spirits badly, or is suffering a talent crisis, the tithe may restore the Elementalist to the spirits' good graces, serving as a Deed of Atonement. In other cases, the Elementalist gains a +1 bonus to his Spellcasting Tests when casting spells involving the element to which he has tithed. This bonus lasts for a year and a day. An Elementalist can only benefit from one tithe to a specific element at a time, but can benefit from tithes to all five elements simultaneously.

Specialists

Some Elementalists specialize in one of the elements. They gain a +2 bonus to any test with an ability conveyed by their Discipline that involves that element or has its power based on it, but they suffer a –2 penalty to tests involving all other elements. This includes casting spells (Thread Weaving, Spellcasting, as well as Effect Tests—note the elemental descriptor prefacing a spell's description), summoning and interacting with elemental spirits, using Discipline abilities such as Earth and Wind, or even talents such as Endure Cold. If an ability does not obviously refer to or make use of an element, there is no bonus or penalty (for example, a Speak Language Test does not involve an element, even though language travels through air). Some abilities can involve an element on certain tests only or involve an element depending on the situation; in these cases, the gamemaster determines if there is a bonus or penalty (for example, Read/write Magic does not involve an element when reading runes, but it does when learning the Fireball spell from a magical text).

Roleplaying Hints

Many Elementalists see their role as a living bridge between the "real" world and the realm of elemental spirits—a realm most Namegivers never see. The Elementalist must connect with the denizens of both worlds while maintaining enough emotional and intellectual distance to keep an impartial watch over the world's elemental balance. This difficult balancing act sometimes causes the Elementalist to behave in ways others find odd, and he may often seem to be slightly distracted.

Also, because Elementalists tend to see their Discipline as a way of getting at essential truths, few of them care to spend time and effort on unnecessary words or flowery phrasing. They often speak and act with a frankness and openness that other people may find blunt, rude, or refreshingly honest. Elementalists who specialize in one particular element tend to have personality traits and quirks similar to those of the elemental spirits they favor. Of all Elementalists, specialists are most likely to behave in ways other Namegivers find inexplicable.

Discipline Violations

Elementalists try to remain in tune with the elements, respecting nature in all its forms and placing the balance of the elements before other considerations. These constraints even apply to specialists; they may favor one element, but not to the extent that the overall balance is threatened. Elementalists who do not acknowledge the importance of each element in his life risk losing touch with the elemental balance, suffering a talent crisis. Elementalists may also bring on talent crises by purposely harming the elemental balance, purposely polluting or harming a given element, or overusing or underusing a particular element. The severity of the violation depends on the nature of the specific offense.

Offending or ignoring an element for a long time may cause either a standard, generalized talent crisis or a specific talent crisis that only affects the adept's ability to wield the neglected element. The adept may fail completely the next time he attempts to use the element in question, and in the interim he may feel a loss of qualities he associates with that element. For example, an Elementalist who deliberately stopped using air spells for a month or more might

suffer a Serious or even Severe air talent crisis. The adept might wake up short of breath every morning, suffer dizzy spells, or hear curses whispered on the wind.

Rituals of Advancement

Because most magicians (with the exception of Illusionists) prefer to keep the extent of their abilities a secret to all but their most trusted allies, Elementalist rituals usually involve private displays of spellcasting and thread-weaving prowess.

Recruitment: Elementalists recruit new adepts privately, sometimes secretly. A magician who needs an apprentice watches for likely candidates in his or her everyday travels. When she finds a potential adept, the magician tests him or her in some way suited to the Discipline. For example, an Elementalist may invite the candidate to share the experience of seeing or feeling a natural event; a rainstorm, surging river, forest, or even a campfire. In the course of ordinary conversation, the adept casually asks the candidate to describe what he sees. Candidates who answer with unusual sensitivity undergo more obvious tests; the adept may summon a spirit and ask the candidate to converse with it. If satisfied by the candidate's responses, the adept recruits the candidate to the Discipline.

Novice (2–4): The adept casts a spell of the new Circle in the presence of an elder.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept must cast a spell of the new Circle in the presence of an elder and five to eight elemental spirits. The higher the Circle of advancement, the more spirits who must attend. The adept must personally locate and persuade the spirits to appear or summon them. This may be more difficult than it sounds, because enlisting an elemental's cooperation often requires the adept to fulfill a request or execute a task for the spirit.

Warden (9–12): The adept researches and demonstrates a spell of the new Circle to other Elementalists.

Ghost Master Ritual: Elementalists use a variant of the Nethermancer's Ritual of the Ghost Master. The Elementalist draws a pentagon rather than a circle, its five points representing the five elements. Ambitious Elementalists, those who would summon a particularly skillful master, disdain to bring the required orichalcum coin to the ritual. Instead, they collect quantities of all five elements and bring them into the pentagon, during the summoning assembling them into new-made orichalcum. The summoned ghost master accepts the raw orichalcum and, when he or she reappears three nights later, returns it in the form of a pledge coin.

Discipline Combinations

The Weaponsmith Discipline is a common choice for a second Discipline, because the Weaponsmith focuses on working with the elements in physical form. The Wizard Discipline also works well as a second choice, as it traditionally encourages stern pragmatism in its practitioners.

The only Discipline that is nearly impossible to combine with that of the Elementalist is the Illusionist Discipline, because the two traditionally require antithetical views of the world. The Illusionist finds the truth of things by disguising it, while the Elementalist breaks things into their component elements, stripping away all disguise and artifice.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Armored Matrix, Armored Matrix, Bargain with Summoned Creature, Disarm Trap, Plant Shelter, Safe Path, Spirit Strike, Warp Missile

Ninth Circle

Earth and Wind: For 2 Strain, the adept may do one of the following with a successful Elementalism (6) Test:
1. Create an earth circle 3 yards in diameter. Every character within the circle, friend or foe, adds +3 to their Spell Defense. The effect lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.
2. Create a flow of air that circulates through a 10 yard by 10 yard by 5 yard volume. The air is brought in from and returns to the Plane of Air and, although cold, is clean and fresh. The effect lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Metal Ward

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Action Tests made by a spirit or creature under his control.
Discipline Talent: Endure Cold

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Reshape Object

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Summoning Circle

Master

Talent Options: First Ring of Perfection, Gold Sense, Shared Matrix, Shared Matrix, Soften Blade, Water Dancing

Thirteenth Circle

Element Matrix: For 3 Strain, the adept can create a temporary Rank 5 Enhanced Matrix from any object made of a single element (a rock or a piece of wood, for example). The matrix lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Moving Earth

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +2 Recovery Tests per day.
Discipline Talent: Elemental Walk

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Earth Armor

CHAPTER EIGHT

AN ILLUSIONIST REVEALS THE TRUTH

The following are the words of Illianstra, Illusionist from the city of Urupa. Her first explanations of her Discipline troubled me, but as she spoke further I realized that her heart is as sound and true as any Wizard's. Many of my fellows who believe otherwise—as many do, for prejudice between magicians is shockingly common—would do well to read this text and revise their opinions a little.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

So you've come to see what secrets you can pry loose from my wagging tongue. Well, you won't be disappointed!

Illusionists know the greatest secret of all: the secret of truth. To know what illusion is, you must first know what's real. Understand?

Your eyes tell me you believe the lies told about Illusionists. That's no matter. Remember, every lie has its seed of truth—though more in some than others—and the truth itself often lies. Puzzled? Consider an onion—or no, an apple—no, a—oh, here, look.

[Editor's Note: At this point Illianstra waved her hands dramatically, produced flashes of light from her palms, and created a vision of Barsaive floating in the air before us.]

This is our world as we see it. Well, as you see it. But that's not the point. Look closer. See, there and there and there? That darkness lurking in the hills, those shadows washing out of forgotten kaers? Those are the Horrors. You don't think about them; most Barsaivians don't. They'd not know a Horror if it walked up and pinched them on the cheeks. Why? Because they've gotten too used to trusting their senses to tell them the "truth" of what they see. And that, my friend, is utter nonsense. In fact, it's dangerous nonsense.

When we lived in the kaers, no one dared trust something as faulty as their own senses. No kaer allowed any one person to decide what was true, and therefore how to live, because the Horrors can so easily fool our senses. Illusionists reminded the people of Barsaive how easily they could be gulled, and kept them vigilant.

Some say our Discipline began in the kaers—maybe so. I've read ancient tales of Illusionists entertaining the people in the kaers, creating great plays for them with magic. Men and women alike fainted at the sight of phantasmal dragons rushing toward them, jaws dripping with flame, or cheered at the spectacle of the hero slaying the Horror and saving the kaer from destruction. But the tales also say that the people picked apart the Illusionist's work for days afterward, uncovering its inner workings through consensus about what was real and what was not. That is the true purpose of my Discipline: not merely to entertain, but to instruct.

We still teach what is real and what is fantasy, though we often receive scant thanks for it. Our illusions and glamours surround us wherever we go, casting bold images before us. Some fools call us charlatans, and claim we do nothing more than use our magic to make a quick bit of silver off the gullible and feebleminded. Not so! Oh, we do earn something for our "performances," but not nearly as much as some would have you believe. Most of us do what we do because it must be done. We will not cease trying to teach you people how to see, though you despise us for it.

I suppose our methods do paint a picture of deception. It's true we often use illusion to hide our faces and pass ourselves off as something we are not. But we are not common thieves! If coin changes hands because of our illusions, or if others are foolish enough to pay far too much money for spells in which they put far too much stock, is that our fault? Are we to blame? No! We do these things so that others will learn to look closely at all things magical. Magic can be beneficial, but can also pose grave danger. We left the kaers, but we have not left behind all the dangers from which they sheltered us. Horrors still roam the land at will, and we Illusionists fear that our fellow Namegivers may have forgotten how subtle these monsters truly are. So when we work illusions that may cause pain or cost someone money, we do so for the greater benefit of all. Through our actions we try to teach others to see as we do, to realize that all of our world is but a thin veil hiding reality in the illusory folds of Truth.

You hear my words with skepticism, as well you should. Questioning face value is a sign of a healthy mind. Also, I admit that some of my kind are more than a little self-serving. There is the seed of truth in your doubting! But I challenge you to find even one Illusionist who has ever deliberately used his craft to harm another Namegiver. You won't find one. If our magic causes harm, it is only the harm that other people allow to fall on themselves! If you believe harm should befall you from an Illusionist's spells, then it certainly will. If not, our magical workings will not disturb even a hair on your head.

I know that to most people this attitude makes it look as if we Illusionists shift responsibility for our own actions to others, but I don't intend it so. I have spoken the truth as I know it. But then, the heart of Illusionist teaching tells us that truth isn't always what it seems…

I sincerely hope this serious flaw in perception is not common to other Illusionists. Do all of these men and women believe themselves blameless for the harm their spells can do because nothing happens unless the victim wills it to or believes it will? Interesting—and frightening.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

THE TALE OF ODU FRATAN

For your better understanding of the worth and power of illusion, I offer this tale. When I was much younger, having just reached the Fourth Circle of my Discipline, I came to live for a time in a small village at the western edge of the Liaj Jungle. The little town was always on the verge of collapse, and I used my talents constantly to keep the people from despair. I learned that the town had begun as a way-station for the caravans that folk were sure would soon begin to pass through with the re-opening of the high roads, but no one came when it became common knowledge that travel through the Liaj was nothing short of suicide. Without the coin and goods that the caravans would bring, the town withered. The villagers scraped a livelihood however they could, and the going had been much harder than they had expected.

Not long after I arrived, Odu Fratan pulled his wagon into town. A tall, strapping human with scraggly hair and a livid scar down his right arm, Fratan doled out food and other sorely needed supplies from the covered back of the wagon. He asked for nothing in return, save that the people listen to his counsel and abide by his advice while he stayed in the town. He claimed his stay would be brief, as he had business in the jungle. No one bothered to ask him the nature of his business.

I didn't much care for Fratan. Most of the townspeople thought me wary of him because he had done what I couldn't: brought them food and other necessities of life. But I knew he was an evil man, for I could practically smell the mark on him. I also knew no one would believe me if I simply said, "Don't listen to this evil man, he'll harm you." So I watched his comings and goings, and waited for a chance to show them the truth.

Odu Fratan made a trip into the jungle once every month, and each time was gone for a week or more. During one of those weeks, I convinced my neighbors to at least give me a chance to show them that Odu was up to no good. If I was wrong, I said, I'd move on and never bother them again.

I was ready the night Odu returned. I made a simple glamour that wouldn't fool anyone close up, but would do the trick perfectly in the moonlight at a distance. My illusion was a hand-span larger than a human, rising out of a shadow at the edge of the town. Covered with spikes, it oozed a malignant purple glow. As I sensed Odu Fratan cresting the rise, I began speaking to the shadowy form. "Yes, master, I have delivered them all to you," I said, in the shiveriest voice I could manage. "This is the last." So saying, out of the shadow I worked another, more lifelike illusion of a young girl. Sweat beaded my brow, and I felt a trickle of blood dribbling from my nose as I strained to hold both illusions together. Then I made the shadowy form grab the little girl and devour her in a gulp.

Shaking with fatigue, I bowed to the thing I'd made and said, "The town is yours, master. Give me the power you promised me."

Suddenly Odu charged at me, screaming and howling for blood. "They were mine," he screeched. "My master promised that if I delivered them to him, my power would reign eternal!"

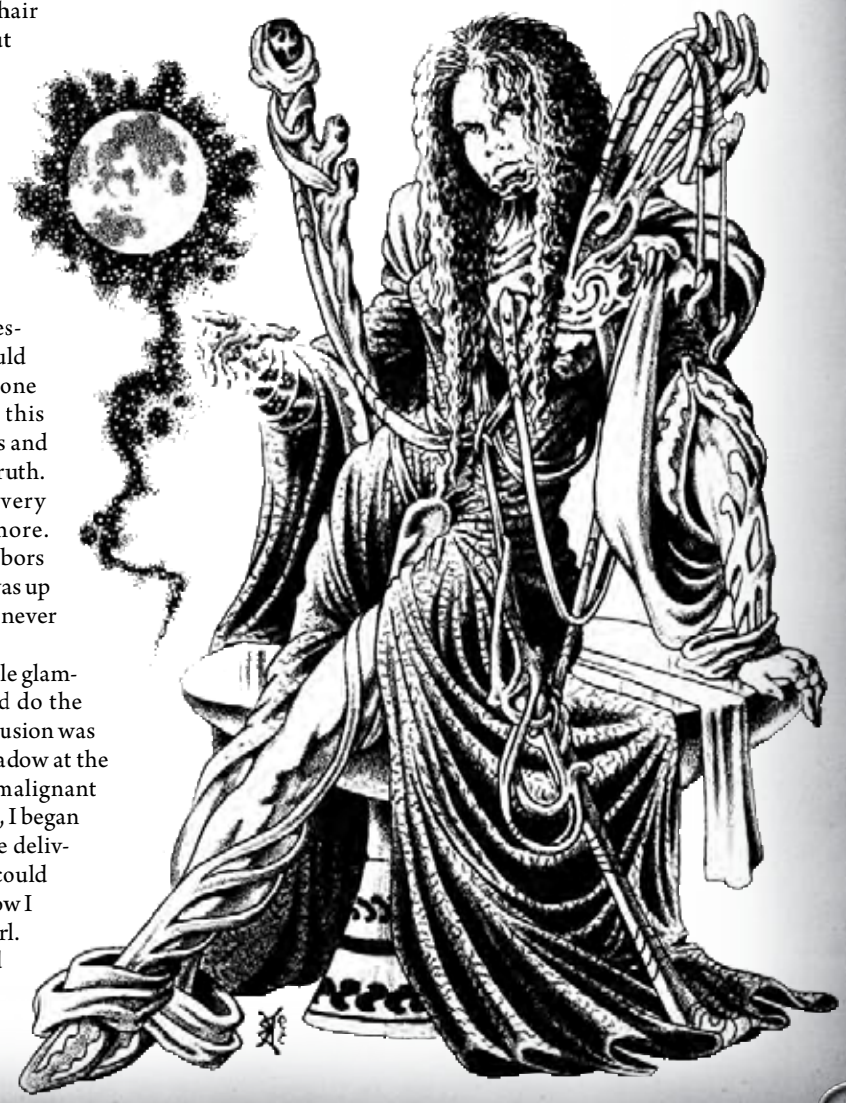
The town Archer shot Odu Fratan through the eye before he reached me. Our "benefactor" was the tool of a Horror, and I alone had sniffed out its taint. With the help of my illusions, he was unmasked before he could harm anyone. Only my illusions could have done it.

That is the power of my Discipline.

ON THE LIFE OF AN ILLUSIONIST

How do I spend my time? Studying, traveling and performing, and having the occasional adventure. Adventures usually prove quite enlightening, and so I go wherever they take me. I pity those magicians who spend all their time with their beaky noses shoved into the spines of moldering texts. Oh, they may understand the theory right enough, but how can anyone truly know what magic is who hasn't hastily whipped off a spell to save herself from certain doom? You can't know the truth without living in the wide world, as the saying goes. And that's as near to an absolute truth as you'll ever hear, so take heed.

I suppose I'm as much a "typical" Illusionist as any, which is to say I'm about as much like another Illusionist as a windling is like



a troll. So in that sense, it's nonsense to speak of "the life of an Illusionist." But if it will help people to understand the truth of my Discipline, I'll gladly describe a day in my life to you.

Mornings come early for followers of my Discipline, just as they do for most magically minded individuals I know. Before I even rise from my bed, I spend a few minutes looking around for illusions or changes; after all, you never know what this lovely, changeable world will throw at you next. If I'm satisfied that nothing much has changed, I perform my morning ablutions. Never you mind the details; let's just say I like to be clean and to wear my hair knotted above my head, as it is now. I can see you admire it, and I thank you.

My morning meal varies, depending on where I am. I'll try just about anything once, adding new flavors, smells, and textures to my repertoire in case I want to use them for illusions. Those three things are the hardest to create, you know. Sight and sound are incredibly simple; most people believe anything that comes through their eyes or ears. But the tongue, nose and skin are touchier, likely to pick up even the smallest mistakes. So I like to eat a lot of different things to see how they feel to these three senses. While I'm eating, I try to puzzle out a little more of the truth of the world. Not easy to do, but I have my training to fall back on. I'll describe that later on, when it will make a little more sense to readers. I spend an hour or so every morning taking in the world around me and seeing if it all makes sense according to the rules I understand.

If I plan to travel, I spend a little time packing up and plotting a trail that won't involve hiking over mountains or through swamps (two geographical nightmares that seem to exist solely to confound travelers). If I plan to stay in one place for a while, I poke around and find someone to talk to. Oftener than not, I discover someone who needs to look a little harder at the world around him. I can't explain how I know them when I see them—we Illusionists simply sense these things. My Discipline demands that I help such people, and so I begin by working a few uncomplicated spells on him to see how he reacts. Sometimes I take a little coin from him if he seems to need an extra effort on my part. As soon as he realizes that I may be gulling him, or that something unusual is happening, I know I've succeeded in opening his eyes to the truth. Off I go, casting a few illusion spells to cover my tracks. After all, I'm no help to others if I'm running from an angry mob of good-hearted but simple-minded citizens eager to avenge a harmless bit of foolery!

If I don't run across someone who needs a truth lesson—a rare occurrence—I practice my spells somewhere out of sight, usually in my room. This practice-time allows me to perfect the little spells I use every day, and to work on the more difficult ones I use more rarely. It also allows me to study the difference between the "real" spells I know how to cast and the illusory ones. It's fascinating how these two types of spells work together, and the differences between them. That very distinction probably holds more than a few clues about the nature of the world we inhabit. That's also part of my training, so it seems like a good time to tackle that subject.

Illianstra's practice of eating new foods in order to master illusions of taste, smell and touch is an excellent example of something few people consider in relationship to this Discipline. The idea that an Illusionist might need to experience something before she can devise an illusion of it is a new idea to me. My own understanding of such things is now more complete, for which I am indebted to Illianstra.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

On Training and Teaching

Some people, especially other magicians, seem to go out of their way to claim that Illusionists have no formal training. That is simply not true, and represents one of the many falsehoods often repeated about the Discipline by those who ought to know better.

The School of Illusion—a fancy Name for our Discipline, isn't it? Quite imposing—includes three kinds of Illusionists: students, teachers, and phantasms. I am a student, and so spend much time traveling across Barsaive to discover the truth for myself. I and my fellow students return home from time to time lest our travels lead us too far from the path, and during these respites from travel we spend most of our time with our teachers.

Our teachers do not lead us by the hand, as they do in some other Disciplines. They rarely tell a student anything as fact, instead confronting us with problems and questions that can guide us to a new level of awareness. All teachers encourage free thinking and a ready exchange of all ideas, no matter how strange or radical. Teachers are often called guides, because they guide the flow of our thoughts where they are naturally inclined, gently prompting us to recognize the truth of our lessons within the frame of our individual world-view rather than forcing us to see our lessons in a specific light as do many teachers of other Disciplines.

Teachers choose their Illusionist apprentices long before the candidates themselves realize they have been singled out. Illusionists seek out would-be adepts who naturally possess a keener eye for what is real than most, and then test the chosen apprentice with illusions designed to distract or terrify her. My teacher chose several particularly horrifying waking nightmares with which to plague me, and I spent several days in numbed terror before I understood what I was seeing. My friends and family all became terrifying monsters; I still see them leering in my dreams from time to time if I have been badly upset. After three days, I began to notice small clues that hinted at the falseness of what I saw, and at last I managed to track down the illusions' source. When I confronted the woman who wished to be my teacher, she congratulated me. Then my training began in earnest. I believe that this is a common way for teacher and student to meet.

Training is a never-ending series of tests and illusions that can drive many a student to complete distraction. In fact, they are meant to do precisely that. The best metal requires the hottest fire, and only stringent training will make a worthwhile Illusionist. Teachers often place their students in the middle of incredibly vivid, lifelike illusions, then giggle hysterically as the student blunders around in search of a way out. This is the essence of training with an Illusionist. You no longer accept things as real simply because you see or hear or smell them. Instead, you test and test and test again absolutely everything before you accept its reality. Of course, one must also become very thorough and very fast at testing reality. Most Illusionists excel at making accurate judgments based on small details. Without swift and accurate analysis, an Illusionist's life would become a never-ending series of tiny, cautious steps in the face of possible peril. What can you possibly hope to accomplish by living that way?

Teaching our Discipline is every bit as demanding as learning it. The teacher must be several steps ahead of the pupil in order to create illusions and cast spells that the student will find nearly impossible to disbelieve. Most Illusionist teachers are far more advanced than their pupils. A Third Circle Swordmaster may very well be able to instruct one of First or Second Circle, but not so an Illusionist. A student rarely learns anything of value from a teacher of a Circle less than three above her own level of ability; most of the time, the difference is five Circles or more. As you might guess, good teachers are in great demand. The best ones often have lists a year and a day long of students waiting for their attention. An Illusionist who finds a good teacher should do everything possible to stay in his or her good graces. If you find a ghost master, so much the better; they can teach some truly extraordinary things! Teaching is time-consuming, and a teacher rarely has time for much adventuring while instructing a pupil. Most teachers take long breaks between students in order to accomplish deeds by which they can advance in the Discipline themselves. Some Illusionists prefer to give up adventuring for a few years while they teach, and then travel for a full year or more.

The beings we call phantasms are mysterious, so much so that some Illusionists do not believe they exist. I am not one of these. I know phantasms exist—I have seen one. According to Illusionist tradition, phantasms are members of our Discipline who have passed beyond the constraints of bodily perception and can see the truth in everything around them. They wander throughout our world, far beyond the borders of Barsaive and even the once-mighty Theran Empire to the south. They offer perhaps the only real hope we have of ever discovering the true nature of the Horrors. I know they are real because one of them, a woman all shimmering and silvery, rescued me from the clutches of a particularly vile Horror last year. People keep telling me she was an avatar of Garlen, but I know the truth. I could see the tell-tale play of illusion magic in her silvery hair and the hem of her dress.

I know the truth.

Might phantasms be Illusionists of sufficient understanding to perceive the place we Wizards Name the Realm of Ideas? From that realm, we believe the ideas of all things come. Readers interested in exploring this possibility may wish to peruse the essay "The Way of Mind and Symbol."

—Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane

On the Rituals of Advancement

All Disciplines have unique methods for determining when an adept is ready to proceed to the next Circle, and we Illusionists are no different. The way in which we mark advancement, however, is different indeed. In most other Disciplines, an adept is given some kind of test to determine his readiness to learn more, and these tests are the same (or nearly so) for all. Staggering under the weight of tradition, these tests admit no changes, great or slight, to better suit them to the individual practitioner. Illusionists see the folly in this way of testing. Why test different students the same way? We tailor our rituals for Circle advancement to each teacher and student, and so more truly measure progress. More than one teacher may use the same form of ritual but each student learns from that ritual in a different way. So for me to speak of this ritual or that ritual would do your book no good, and certainly won't serve truth. The most I can give you is a few hints and loose patterns.

Most advancement rituals test the student's perception, requiring her to discern reality and truth from illusion and falsehood. In one of my earliest rituals, advancing from First to Second Circle, I faced two threats—one real, one illusory—and had to choose which to defend against. (I passed that test with my usual flair, of course.) Magical duels to the first blood sometimes serve as advancement rites, with elegant illusions cloaking the damaging real spells as they fly toward their target. In truth, the only limit to an Illusionist's advancement ritual is the inventiveness of the teacher—and those of my Discipline are nothing if not inventive! Prospective Illusionists, take heed; expect everything and nothing, and you won't be surprised.

I personally know no one who has advanced beyond the Ninth Circle, though such people certainly exist. What manner of ritual they undergo to advance so far, I can't guess, but I imagine it must be quite hazardous. It would have to be, wouldn't it, to test the discerning eye of so powerful a mage? Rumor has it that the highest levels of advancement require rituals that can only be performed by a phantasm or even a dragon. A seed of truth doubtless lives in these tales, but how much of the plant is an outright lie I cannot tell.

CHARLATANS

Optional Rule: Players and gamemsters who want to incorporate the danger of falling towards the path of the Charlatan into their game can employ this optional rule to represent the conflict between temptation to fool others and the responsibility to teach them about the truth.

Whenever the Illusionist uses his abilities to fool a Namegiver to satisfy no more than his personal interest (as opposed to good done by fooling villains or fool someone into cooperation to defeat a threat), the Illusionist gains a Temptation Point. Whenever he approaches a trainer for Circle-advancement, the trainer makes a Perception Test against the adept's Social Defense. If successful, and if the adept's Temptation Point Total is higher than the Circle he wants to advance to, the teacher recognizes the adept as a Charlatan. Most Illusionists refuse to train Charlatans, except if they are Charlatans themselves—and Charlatans are interested in profit, so their demands are high. A Charlatan can reduce his Temptation Point Total by performing Deeds of Atonement (p. 8), which usually means refraining from charlatanry and taking above-the-call effort to teach others the truth.

CONCERNING CHARLATANS

The charlatan is the Illusionist everyone despises, especially those of us who care about our Discipline. Any real Illusionist will warn you away from these despicable liars. Shortly after Barsaive's people left the kaers, certain Illusionists allowed the acquisition of silver to concern them more than teaching the world to see the truth. These adepts and their dishonorable descendants continue to travel across Barsaive, bilking the gullible out of their fortunes and working "miracles" for fantastic sums of money.

I am not speaking of a harmless play-illusion for which one might charge a few copper or a couple of silver coins. I speak of frauds that reduce good folk to beggars, at the very least parting them from their coin without teaching them a thing.

A charlatan possesses little or no knowledge of real magic. All his spells are illusory, save those that affect himself alone. Charlatans show exceptional skill at creating illusions, but once those illusions are dispelled or disbelieved he cannot defend himself or do any harm to his angry audience.

Some charlatans have good hearts and do what they do out of simple laziness. They feel little desire to understand the truth, and prefer enrichment to enlightenment. The ignorant tend to tar all Illusionists with the charlatan's brush, but as much as I protest that injustice, I urge readers of this discourse to remember that charlatans exist. Not all of them have rotted wood for hearts, though—many are much like any other Namegiver trying to keep herself in food and shelter by any means she can. So judge them with charity, and the Passion of Justice will smile on you for it.

GAME INFORMATION

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

For most Illusionist characters, nothing is as it appears. An Illusionist's talents allow her to alter reality to suit her whims, and she assumes that other powers existing in the world do the same. An Illusionist is therefore far less likely than others to take things at face value, and enjoys investigating oddities in order to understand them. Of course, Illusionists usually know enough to accept as real those things that present an imminent and obvious threat (for example, by eating one of his companions). An Illusionist may spend one or two brief moments inspecting the threat for flaws that might indicate its falsity, but she will not simply stand there disbelieving in the thing while it does her injury.

Illusionists are often entertainers at heart. They love delighting crowds with their magic, and often perform without being asked. They typically regard their entertainment as filling two vital needs: providing amusement to lighten dark hours, and giving the common folk a lesson in how to perceive the truth. Most Illusionists see truth as being more subtle and elusive than people perceive through their senses. Through their illusions, they demonstrate how easily the senses can be befuddled, and teach that reality is not always what it seems. Illusionists often go out of their way to explain their motives to onlookers; if sufficient silver is not forthcoming or the crowd does not seem suitably impressed by the illusory display, many Illusionists resort to sermonizing on the nature of truth in the hope of shaming people into paying up.

DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS

Because of the transitory nature of illusion magic, the Illusionist Discipline has few true traditions that are passed down from master to student. This makes generalizations about followers of the Discipline difficult, and a Discipline violation for one adept is less likely to hold true for another. Some of the more common violations include relying too heavily on "real" magic instead of illusions, abandoning the search for truth behind the world's façade, or taking the world at face value.

RITUALS OF ADVANCEMENT

The masters of illusion refuse to subscribe to established rituals. An elder improvises each advancement ritual, and ideally the adept never realizes the ritual has begun until it ends. Typically the elder contrives an elaborate hoax, some sort of pretext for the adept to learn and use a new spell or talent of the appropriate Circle. Troubadours recite with glee the Twelve Rites of Master Jonwal, whose mentor devised brilliant, devious rituals to test Jonwal as he advanced. He failed to even suspect the tests she set him while advancing through the Twelfth Circle, only recognizing her illusion when he advanced to Thirteenth Circle. This amazing level of deception has never been duplicated. During Jonwal's progress, both mentor and adept suffered several mental breakdowns.

Recruitment: Illusionists recruit new adepts privately by watching for candidates in their everyday travels, then testing likely candidates in some way suited to their Discipline. Illusionists often recruit compulsive liars into their Discipline, choosing people whose reputations precede them so far that adepts can easily track them down. An Illusionist who decides to recruit a candidate usually approaches his target masked by an rudimentary illusion, then engages the compulsive liar in conversation. If the candidate pen-

etrates the illusion, the Illusionist may offer to initiate him or her into the Discipline.

Rituals of Advancement: Illusionists observe no common rituals to mark their advancement through the Circles of their Discipline. At each Circle the adept simply attempts to deceive his or her teacher with ever more elaborate illusions, or is required to see through such illusions without warning.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Illusionist learns and unerringly performs the ghost master ritual of another Discipline. If the Ghost Master Ritual Test succeeds, the Illusionist summons a ghost master of that Discipline. The Illusionist gives this ghost master an illusory orichalcum coin and must persuade him or her to bring an Illusionist ghost master when he returns in three days. At the next summoning, the Illusionist ghost master appears and receives a true orichalcum pledge coin. The Illusionist must also somehow pacify the ghost master he deceived.

Discipline Combinations

The Thief Discipline works well as an Illusionist's second Discipline; the magician's spells and abilities help make this combination a master of larceny. The Troubadour Discipline also blends well, as the adept can use illusion magic to enhance her performance abilities, and Troubadour talents like Item History and Empathic Sense can help an Illusionist more readily perceive truth. Few combat-oriented Disciplines are well-suited to the Illusionist, as magicians typically spend years honing their mind instead of their body. The Swordmaster is perhaps the most complementary, as illusion can be used to enhance the flashiness of combat, and the Swordmaster's social talents blend well with Illusionist abilities. Despite the shared focus on spellcasting, Illusionists rarely work well with a magician Discipline as their second choice. The additional spells often drive the adept to rely too much on real magic instead of illusions, a common Discipline violation.

The Archer, Elementalist, and Weaponsmith Disciplines are the most difficult combinations, as they traditionally follow an honest, straightforward philosophy that clashes with the shifting perceptions of the Illusionist.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Armored Matrix, Armored Matrix, Armored Matrix, Conceal Object, Hold Thread, Incite Mob, Memorize Image, Safe Thought

Ninth Circle

Hide Matrix: For 2 Strain, the adept can make a spell matrix invisible in astral space. The adept makes an Illusionism Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty to spot the hidden spell matrix using the Astral Sight talent or a similar ability. The effect lasts for 24 hours.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Detect Falsehood

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Mind Wave

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Multi-Tongue

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Thoughtful Expression

Master

Talent Options: Casting Pattern, Chameleon, Impossible Hide, Shared Matrix, Shared Matrix, Shared Matrix

Thirteenth Circle

Truth Interpreted: For 4 Strain, the adept makes an Illusionism Test to create an illusory environment. The adept may change every part of his surroundings within 50 yards, and a Disbelief Test against the Illusionism Test result is required to see through every single change. Objects that the adept changes cannot cause any effect besides fooling the senses. They cannot, for example, cause damage. While the adept can change everything in the area, the changes abruptly stop at a distance of 50 yards from him, so they might fade out if he moves or, when changing the ground below him, be obvious to a perceptive onlooker. The illusions and ability to make changes last for 10 minutes, but the adept may extend this without interruption by taking the Strain again.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Multi-Weaving

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +2 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Second Chance

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Range Pattern

CHAPTER NINE

WALKERS IN SHADOW

The following treatise is the work of the noted t'skrang Nethermancer T'shan V'ruda, until recently a resident of Throal. Sadly, V'ruda had not completed the document at the time of his banishment from our kingdom, thus leaving several tantalizing hints unexplored. I have noted such omissions as they occur in the text. Though the Hall of Records adopts no official position on the veracity of the charges against V'ruda, I will permit myself to observe that future scholars will bemoan the incompleteness of this account long after all have forgotten the complicated web of accusations and counter-accusations that occasioned his departure from our kingdom.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Many speak ill of the path I walk, the path of the Nethermancer. My colleagues and I are regarded with distaste, unease, even violent prejudice. As is the case in any such discrimination, its roots lie in ignorance. Simply because we inquire into the worlds beyond our own, we are suspected of consorting with Horrors and treated as pariahs. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Our explorations serve only to protect our fellow Namegivers from the ravages of the Horrors and their constructs, including the undead. Do the spells and talents we wield carry a dark tang to them, a stench of the grave? Perhaps to the clouded mind, to the Namegiver who gives credence only to his untutored feelings and flees from the blandishments of reason. But any who care to think carefully on the matter recognize the Nethermancer as a bulwark, the last line of defense between this fragile world of life and the encroaching worlds of horror and death.

I consider the invitation to contribute to this esteemed anthology an opportunity to correct many of the misapprehensions and downright calumnies that surround the way of the Nethermancer. I am confident that, should you read this with a mind even half open, any misgivings you might have toward my Discipline shall be allayed utterly.

ON THE CONTINUUM THAT IS LIFE AND DEATH

People fear Nethermancers because they fear death, and Nethermancers are symbolically bound to the concept of death. But Nethermancers do not fear death, for we know it intimately. We know that it is not an impassable barrier, a wall between something that is good and something that is bad. Death is but a doorway, a threshold into another way of being. Life is not superior to death, nor is death superior to life. Both have their struggles, their pleasures, and their terrors. Only a fool looks upon death as anything more than another phase in the building of one's legend. Sadly, the land of the living is awash in fools who forever dread their mortality. But mortality is as much a part of us as our eyes or our toes. Those who fear death fear themselves. And if we Nethermancers are thought of as harshly mocking or haughty, it is only because others have not accepted the inevitable fact of death as we have. For with acceptance, we give up our fears.

Fear is not an emotion worthy of a Nethermancer. The true follower of the path learns discretion, certainly—we are not known as a foolhardy group. But every day we contemplate the worst that can happen to us and accept its possibility. To conquer fear is to gain power. Fear is something that is useful to us, when found in others. The Nethermancer learns to foster fear, to manipulate it. If your heart contains fear, we will grab hold of it and use it to lead you about like a dog on a rope. And you shall deserve such treatment, for fear is the hallmark of the inferior mind. You need not be a Nethermancer to conquer your fears. But in my experience, you must be able to see that life and death are not separate things. They are different ends of the same path, separated by no more than a gentle stream.

Learn this lesson and gain power.

Bravo for brother V'ruda! If only more of the ignorant masses would read these words, they would realize how wrong-headed and groundless are their fears of us.

—Elron, Nethermancer of Rhegion

ON THE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT

As I have mentioned, the superstitious and willfully ignorant associate my learned craft with death and the undead. However, the Nethermancer concerns himself not so much with life and with death, as with the spirit, or soul. All Nethermancer talents emanate from an understanding of the spirit. And the majority of Nethermancer spells work

through the spirit, either the spirit of the spellcaster or of his target. Granted, sometimes the spiritual aspect of a nethermantic spell like Shift Skin may not be immediately apparent to the uninitiated. But it is my fervent hope that by the end of your perusal of this document, you will at least begin to understand the subtle spiritual resonances that accompany this and other gruesome-seeming effects in the Nethermancer's arsenal. Soon you will be able to look upon the spontaneous wrenching and tearing of the epidermal surface occasioned by the Shift Skin spell and think not, "How thoroughly appalling!" but, "Ah, what a profound lesson in the metaphysics of the soul!"

The metaphysics of the soul—this is the Nethermancer's field of expertise. You might then ask, what is the soul? This, dear reader, is the question all Nethermancers spend their lives seeking to answer. For the spirit is an elusive thing, one that forever evades precise definition and explication. We grope tentatively toward knowledge of it. This in itself should tell you something very important about Nethermancers. Unlike other Disciplines I could name, Nethermancers do not claim to possess definitive answers to the questions posed by existence. The Nethermancer learns that all certainty is but self-delusion, for the most important single element of any Namegiver's being—his spirit—remains an enigma. It is not knowing the correct answers that really matters, for there is no single truth. Rather, the superior being knows the correct questions and strives to answer them, and that is more than enough.

This is not to say that we are entirely ignorant about the spirit. Generation upon generation of Nethermancers has examined its nature. Though many of the conclusions we have reached are altogether too subtle for a general audience to grasp, I will attempt to elucidate a few of the general principles for you.

The spirit can be defined as the essential essence of a being. The spirit is connected to the body, and provides its basic impetus, much as a fire engine provides the impetus for the riverboats of my people. Without an engine, the boat does not run. Without a spirit, thought and emotion end, and the body eventually dies. The spirit is the vessel that contains a being's identity, its Name, which gives birth to all thoughts, memories, emotions. Though the body cannot truly live on without a spirit (I'll touch upon apparent exceptions in due course), the spirit almost always persists after the decease of the body, for the True pattern of any Namegiver is connected more to the spirit than the physical body. When the body dies, a severance occurs in the pattern, and a vestigial fragment of the pattern remains connected to the corpse. However, the remainder of the True pattern persists with the spirit—or, as some claim, *is* the spirit. (The question of whether the True pattern and spirit are in fact one and the same has raged among Nethermancers since legendary times. It is essentially a matter of semantics.)

At any rate, it is knowledge of spirits that enables us to understand and influence spirits—both of the living and the unliving—the ability that most strongly characterizes the Nethermancer. We must first of all understand our own spirits before we can learn to engage in dealings, consensual or otherwise, with other spirits, discorporate or otherwise. A Nethermancer is therefore a contemplative individual, one given to great introspection. Solitude is the Nethermancer's friend. Though I have met talkative and loquacious colleagues in my day, most of us are quiet and restrained. Indeed, our fearsome reputation is quite at odds with our sedate behavior, a fact which occasions many delightfully droll comments at Nethermancer gatherings. The fact that we are considered sinister embitters some of us, but most of my colleagues are acute connoisseurs of irony, and treat the absurd general dislike of our Discipline with sardonic humor. I remember one interesting occasion when a windling spy was found secreted in an empty ale barrel at a symposium of Nethermancers I attended in Iopos. We were able to wring much amusement from a series of experiments designed to acquaint the irritating interloper with—but I digress.

The t'skrang expresses here the true heart of the nethermantic way. Understand the never-ending quest, and you understand the Nethermancer.
—Yllom, Nethermancer of Throal

On the Migration of the Spirit After Death

The relationship between True pattern and spirit brings us naturally to the question of the fate of the spirit after death. Where does it go? This is another of the profound questions that guides the Nethermancer. Simply put, the spirit goes to many places, some unknown, for there appears to be no single destination for a spirit that has passed over the life/death threshold.

Some have proposed that an orderly determination of the migration of spirits after death once existed. These individuals believe that the fate of a spirit can be predicted based on certain observable factors concerning the being's life. They believe that the souls of those who live virtuous lives travel to a variety of different paradisiacal realms on the other side of astral space. Such realms are described in great detail in early legends, though the accounts differ greatly from one another. Needless to say, the definitions of virtue required for admittance vary just as widely from tale to tale. Some of my brethren take these tales literally, claiming that all of these blissful afterlives truly existed, in harmony with one another. The assignment of particular souls to particular paradises depended upon the culture of a Namegiver's birth, or on the Passion with whom the Namegiver chose to identify. Other Nethermancers argue that these legends are unreliable as factual accounts and contend that they refer to a single afterlife realm capable of altering itself to fit the desires of each soul it contained. I have personally encountered evidence that would, frustratingly enough, seem to confirm both theories simultaneously!

[Here T'shan includes a marginal note which, if I decipher his hand correctly, reads: Include story of the Seven Stairways? *It is a great loss to scholarship that this must remain but a tantalizing hint.*—Derrat*]*

The same legends also describe a similarly elaborate web of hells that awaited the souls of those who had committed misdeeds in life. Again, Nethermancers differ as to whether these actually existed in a vast jumble of separate realities, or if the truth must be considered lost, transmuted to legend by the drift of memory and fantasy. Yet a third theory may also explain the variety of hells in old legends: this theory holds that these references describe the home realm of the Horrors themselves. This seems convincing to me. Perhaps those whose True patterns became twisted by their own foul deeds came to mystically resemble the Horrors and were drawn to their realm after death.

At any rate, these explanations now are of mere historical interest. At some point in history, the orderly transmission of souls to proper destinations was permanently disrupted and remains so to this day. This may have happened during an earlier Scourge, or it may have happened when Death itself was buried beneath the volcanic fury of the sea that now bears his name. We can no longer predict where a Namegiver's soul will go when his body dies. Some spirits continue to wander Barsaive (and presumably other earthly regions) after the deaths of their bodies. (Though they maintain only insubstantial forms, it is possible to interact with them via the use of certain of our spells and talents.) These souls may remain here for various reasons. Some wish to finish some task uncompleted in life, from the building of a bridge to the guarding of an ancient manuscript. Others may be unreconciled to the manner and timing of their deaths and wish to exact vengeance on the living being they deem responsible. Still others may simply be unaware of the fact that they're dead; not surprisingly, death can interfere with correct perception of one's circumstances. (Are you sure you didn't meet with a fatal accident today?) There also exist those unfortunate souls shackled to this plane by the foul magics of Horrors and their allies. Here I speak of the ranks of the undead.

Still other spirits migrate into astral space, where the metaphysical pollution found there transforms some into quite fearsome entities. Other astral spirits, particularly those that once belonged to strong and worthy adepts in life, may in fact continue their battles against the Horrors in their ghostly forms. Both twisted and heroic spirits can be contacted by Nethermancers, particularly by those powerful and courageous enough to enter astral space.

However, this still leaves many spirits unaccounted for. There are vast numbers of dead individuals—particularly those long dead—who can no longer be contacted. The fate of this majority of dead remains one of the ultimate mysteries. Perhaps, somehow, they have entered the forgotten paradises of legend. Or perhaps they have been swallowed by the home of the Horrors.

On the State That is Undeath

If life and death are separated by a stream that represents the shift from one state to another, the undead are beings who straddle that stream. They are forever arrested in the moment of death, neither truly living nor truly dead. They are greatly feared for this very reason. Even the lowliest cadaver man engenders fear far out of proportion to any actual threat it poses. For example, to anyone with a whit of combat experience, the cadaver man poses a threat only if it achieves a great stroke of luck. Yet the cadaver man inspires primal terror. This is because it and other undead creatures are thought to be "unnatural."

If you believe that magic is unnatural and that any state that cannot be achieved without resort to the arcane arts is somehow sinister and terrifying, you are likely to fear the undead. But this makes you a benighted idiot, for magic is the best representation of what is natural. It suffuses the world and permeates all of us. It is as much a part of us as the air we breathe. No magic, even the magic we Nethermancers use, even that which exists on the threshold between life and death, is inherently evil. Nor, for that matter, is it inherently good. Magic has no mind, no morality—those who wield it make the choices for good or evil. I can use the spells that disturb you so much and yet protect you and your kin from the

Horrors. If you are alive and well because of my efforts, how can you call the mere tools I used evil? Is a sword evil in and of itself? A vial can be used to hold healing potions or poison—if it is filled with poison, is it the vial or the poisoner who does wrong?

I have created undead beings myself. Does this shock you? No doubt it does. But wait, do you know what I did with my undead servants? I sent them to fight the Horror called Shezkseti, and saved more than a dozen villagers it had penned up for future torture. My creations were victims it had already slain, relatives and loved ones of those I rescued. They fought against that Horror with passion and fury. Though they were torn to bloody shreds by the Horror's claws, I am confident that they suffered their second, more infinitely painful deaths with equanimity. For they knew that their sacrifice fulfilled a vital goal. And their sacrifice gave meaning to their lives. Yes, I used the same tactic favored by the Horrors themselves. I threw that tactic in their faces, cut them with their own blades. If you call me a monster because of this, I can only laugh at your contemptible stupidity.

Perhaps those of you still reading are interested in the technical aspects of undeath. The zombie offers an interesting example. When the spirit departs the body, it takes most of a Namegiver's True pattern with it. But it leaves a small part of the pattern behind, the part that connects the subject's soul and mental faculties to its body and physical abilities. Various spells, Horror abilities, and magical treasures can attach a spiritual pattern to this part to reanimate the dead. Most often, the worker of the magic will be reattaching the being's original spiritual pattern. It is often the case that the crude force of the required arcane energies warps and degrades the spiritual pattern. This is why most cadaver men are but drooling engines of destruction; the fine details of their mortal existence have been melted into a clump of vague intelligence and malice. It is possible, however, to restore a relatively intact personality to a cadaver man. A prime example of this would be the subjects of the legendary Twiceborn, Queen of Parlainth's dead.

On the Workings of Nethermagic

I describe the manufacture of cadaver men in detail not simply out of arrogant pedantry. It is also a prime example of the practical application of our craft. The Nethermancer consciously manipulates patterns, reaching out and shaping the patterns of others to achieve our effects. If you find the Nethermancer's gaze unpleasantly penetrating, it is because we know the magical materials of which you are made.

Here I do not speak of pattern magic, of finding the pattern items which relate to you and thereby gaining power over you. This area is not specifically the province of the Nethermancer. I speak instead of abilities which affect the things held in common by all patterns. We can manipulate your pattern not because we have access to knowledge of its unique characteristics, but because we know of the parts that comprise all patterns. All of us have a consciousness, which is partly generated by the body (by the brain, to be precise) and partly by the spirit. All intelligent beings have a point in their pattern where the body and spirit connect to form the mind. All of us have other common connections in our patterns, fusing together all of the separate things that make up a whole being. Many of our magical spells operate by subverting the magical energy of patterns, moving it around to achieve desired effects.

Further examples will illuminate my point.

[The examples exist here only in point form. V'ruda evidently intended to flesh these out later in the process.—Derrat*]*

Spirit Grip: taps into pattern of spirits, leaking from severed junction: death/life pattern break—question of malevolence?

Undead Struggle: tendril fires from own TP to TP of undead, hitting warped spirit/body juncture.

Bone Dance: access through spirit/body juncture, disconnects subject's spirit to body flow, repl. by nethmr's willpower.

Experience Death: in through severed s/b juncture, momentary connection of nethmr's memory sense juncture to brain/pattern juncture.

On Understanding the Horrors

As I have described in the preceding passage, finally sealing off our dimension from the Horrors will only be possible once we have answered the Eight Questions of Jsona Var. Until that time, we must rely instead on countermeasures to fight the Horrors after they have crossed the threshold to our world. And if these measures are to be effective, they must be based on knowledge. Nethermancers are oft accused of all manner of vile acts because we dare to investigate the very nature of the Horrors. Though such investigations bring temptations that have felled more than one Nethermancer, on the whole our efforts have been a boon to all Namegivers. We have learned advanced techniques for dampening the Karma abilities of Horrors, for mimicking their forms and actions, for restraining them where they stand. Yet we have received little credit for this from the mindless wad of Barsaivian citizenry. I am told that the residents of Thera are more advanced in this regard, that they understand the true importance of the Nethermancer to the survival of our races. But here we receive only abuse for our efforts. It should be little wonder that we regard the uninformed masses as essentially moronic.

Here is one final secret many may not wish to hear: just as the line between life and death is largely illusory, no real line exists between the behavior of Namegivers and the behavior of Horrors. To understand them, you must realize that the emotions we often consider evil—fear, jealousy, rage, hatred, confusion, despair—are their food. They need these things to survive, as we need meat and bread. (The question of how they survive in their own realm during times of low magic is one that has puzzled Nethermancers for centuries.) They elicit these emotions in us in order to live, just as we grow crops or hunt for game. We feel no guilt when we slaughter a thundra for its meat. Likewise, the Horror feels nothing but appetite and anticipation when it marks a Namegiver and begins to elicit in him the dark and delicious emotions it so craves.

Take the worst thing you have ever heard of a Horror doing, and I will show you a Namegiver who did the same. These bizarre beasts from beyond have no monopoly on acts of atrocity. We Namegivers have been slaughtering one another since the days of legend. The Horrors do what they do in order to feed. Yet when we strike out at one another, we do not necessarily need to do so to survive. We have killed one another in the name of kings, in the name of Passions, in the name of racial hatreds, in the name of stupid and petty ancestral squabbles. We continue to believe that we are fundamentally better than the Horrors, when, if anything, we are worse.

This is why, when you proclaim that the struggle against the Horrors is a fundamental fight between good and evil, the Nethermancer laughs. The laugh of the Nethermancer is long and loud, and inside that laugh is the rattle of bones. The rattle of a mountain of bones, bones of the innocent, a mountain built by Namegivers as well as Horrors. It is true that we must fight them and we must slay them. They might need us for food, but we have no need to be eaten. But this is no battle of ultimate morality. It is simply another jungle struggle between predator and prey, a battle the Nethermancers will help win. And after the Namegivers win, we will go back to slaying one another as if nothing had happened. And beneath the clatter of sword against shield shall be the laughter of the Nethermancer. You shall shiver, wonder briefly what it is all about, then shrug and return to your killing.

I have refrained from comment in this document, thinking that my uneasiness about it was a result of my own prejudices and not the information contained within. After considerable thought, and multiple readings, I have concluded that my unease is entirely justified. The view of the Nethermancer Discipline as portrayed in this document is frightening. The author has not done as he promised in the introduction and has perhaps worsened my own beliefs about adepts who follow this most dangerous and suspicious Discipline.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Game Information

Roleplaying Hints

When creating a Nethermancer, players should bear in mind that they have chosen a Discipline that is generally viewed with suspicion and fear. Because of their reputation as meddlers in matters related to undead and Horrors, many who choose this path already consider themselves outcasts or otherwise alienated from their society.

An important consideration when creating your character is deciding how your character came to choose this unpopular Discipline. He may have been singled out for abuse by other youngsters during childhood, or been affected by the misfortunes of parents unfairly suspected of consorting with Horrors. Some Nethermancers may be members of racial or cultural minorities in their home villages and may have suffered prejudice because of it. Others may simply have been different from their peers for as long as they can remember; absorbed by death and decay and fascinated by legends describing the Horrors and the terror they spread.

Of course, not all Nethermancers need have been outcasts in their early lives. Some may seek vengeance against the Horrors, and believe that using the Horrors' own tools against them is the swiftest and surest path to victory. Others manage to hide their fascination with the dark matters of the Nethermancers' craft until the chance for initiation presents itself.

Few Nethermancers live quiet lives in ordinary villages. While most villages can boast at least one adept to serve as an advisor, few wish to have an expert in death magic act as a mentor to their children. As a result, most would-be Nethermancers leave home in search of masters to perform their initiation. This circumstance adds to most Namegivers' dislike of Nethermancers; they fear these adepts will lure their sons and daughters away from them forever with dark promises of forbidden knowledge.

Not surprisingly, these attitudes lead most Nethermancers to disdain the average Namegiver. Those who do not show a healthy disrespect for the masses often learn it from their masters, who couch their contempt in a sardonic, mocking laugh at things others consider tragic, and display little compassion for any behavior they consider foolish.

Most Nethermancers are masters of moral relativism, holding to few absolute rules of behavior. The Discipline teaches that knowledge itself is neither good nor evil; it can only be put to good or evil uses. Nethermancers generally define "good" as a long-term result; since they view death as a change of state rather than a permanent end, they generally give the possible deaths of Namegivers less weight than others might.

Discipline Violations

Because Nethermancers are traditionally taught never to regret mistakes, only learn from them, a Nethermancer who begins to doubt the worthiness of his actions may suffer a talent crisis. Much of the Nethermancer's magic depends on his self-assurance; guilty

feelings may also create a mental block that makes it harder to use his magic effectively. Because many Nethermancers view life and death as different ends of the same road, mourning the dead may also cause a talent crisis.

The most common taboo for Nethermancers, however, is giving in to fear. The Discipline teaches that fear is a tool; to be swayed by it is a shameful impediment to their own success. Nethermancers overcome by fear are likely to suffer talent crises until they perform a Deed of Atonement, usually by confronting and defeating the source of the fear.

Rituals of Advancement

Nethermantic rituals often involve contact with spirits or, in rare cases, Horror magic. Nethermancers often use their advancement rituals to demonstrate their skill in summoning and controlling various entities.

Recruitment: Nethermancers ask for various spirits' recommendations to help choose suitable apprentices.

Novice (2–4): The adept casts a spell of the new Circle in the presence of a living or deceased elder.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept finds a spirit that can settle the truth of some historically disputed issue. He or she summons the spirit to answer questions related to that dispute for a panel of Nethermancers and scholars supporting both sides of the issue.

Warden (9–12): The adept researches and demonstrates a spell of the new Circle to other Nethermancers.

Ghost Master Ritual: The ghost master ritual for Nethermancers has fewer requirements and special restrictions as that of other Disciplines, as Nethermancers invented it and are most proficient at it. Likewise, Nethermancers are more likely to become ghost masters after their death, and are very open to influence things in the land of the living from beyond the grave without elaborate shows of will to find them. The ritual consists of a simple ritual summoning of the ghost master, but the adept must bargain with the ghost master or reason for his worthiness as if seeking a living teacher, instead of being trained automatically. The ghost master may provide a task for the adept to fulfill in the land of the living as recompense.

Discipline Combinations

Because Nethermancers are traditionally taught to seek knowledge in all forms, an individual adept may be interested in learning any of the other Disciplines. Unfortunately, Nethermancers often have trouble finding masters willing to tutor them in secondary Disciplines because other adepts are as likely as the average Namegiver to be prejudiced against them.

The overlapping of required talents for the other spellcasting Disciplines offers the Nethermancer potentially rapid acquisition of a wide variety of additional abilities. Many Nethermancers are attracted to the Weaponsmith Discipline because of the metaphorical connection between weapons and death. The way of the Beastmaster may appeal to Nethermancers who wish to demonstrate control over creatures of both the astral and physical realms.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Animate Object, Armored Matrix, Armored Matrix, Astral Pocket, Cold Purify, Life Check, Matrix Strike, Steely Stare

Ninth Circle

Otherworldly Control: For 2 Strain, the adept may make an additional Willpower Test to resist fear or other magic which causes him to lose control of his emotions. If the adept cannot normally resist the effect, this ability does not work; Otherworldly Control allows additional attempts to resist, but does not create them where no opportunity exists.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Bargain with Summoned Creature

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Action Tests made by a spirit or creature under his control.
Discipline Talent: Summoning Circle

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Netherwalk

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Bone Compass

Master

Talent Options: Detect Influence, Ethereal Weapon, Second Chance, Shared Matrix, Shared Matrix, Wound Transfer

Thirteenth Circle

Astral Face: For 3 Strain, the adept can alter the features of his face and head. His altered appearance is smoother, the skin often silver or black. Altered eyes contain specks of unearthly light and the teeth are dull and unreflective except for narrow-writ runes centered on each tooth. This new face gives the adept a better sense of astral space. He gains a +5 bonus to his Spellcasting and spell Effect Tests while it is in effect. The ability lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Spell Crystal Lock

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Multi-Weaving

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +2 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Soul Shatter

CHAPTER TEN

ON THE WAY OF THE SCOUT

The following account was drawn from a conversation between the windling Scout Teelan Jupray and my fellow scholar Jerriv Forrim, scribe and scholar of the Library of Throal. Though I might have preferred otherwise, Jerriv had already edited this work when he presented it to me. Such is the archivist's way.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

ONE WITH THE WORLD

No one understands us—sad, but true. How many times have I heard people describe Scouts as "half-Warrior, half-Thief," and leave it at that? Such a simplistic analysis. There is so much more to my Discipline than that. However frustrating it may be, I have no choice but to accept the fact that an amazing number of misconceptions surround the Discipline of the Scout.

What misconceptions? Well, let me name some. First and foremost, that we are little more than glorified trackers. What nonsense! Anyone can learn to track; there is no magic in it. Hunters of all sorts learn the basic skills. But does the ability to follow tracks, spoor, and broken branches make one a Scout? It does not. Other misconceptions? That because we share certain talents with Archers and Thieves, we practice those talents in the same way as those other Disciplines. Again, a sad mistake, I assure you. In truth, all of our abilities—those that lead to us being labeled "trackers," "Archers," and "Thieves"—spring from one, well, I hesitate to class it as a "skill," a "talent" or an "ability." It is all of these and so much more. Let me explain.

To be a Scout means to be one with the world. We—I and my fellows—open our senses to the world around us. All of our senses, and all of the world. That is the part of our Discipline that non-Scouts never seem to understand. Think of a tracker for a moment. The tracker follows his quarry through the woods and forests using his eyes and, to a lesser degree, his ears. He sees broken branches, disturbed foliage, footprints, and maybe the spoor of his quarry. Sometimes he can hear the passage of that quarry through the woods—the cracking of a twig, even the creature's breathing. This proud woodsman believes he has "opened his senses" to the world around him.

Nonsense! From a Scout's point of view, his perceptions are as limited as those of a child peeking through a keyhole. Think on it: the tracker selects the senses and the clues that he believes are important. He may notice broken branches, because those clues are "appropriate" for the task of tracking. Anything "inappropriate" is ignored or discarded. (Please appreciate that I am not demeaning the tracker. Not seriously, at least. By opening two senses, he is more in tune with his world than most people, who stumble through the world guided by one sense only … and even that is used imperfectly.)

But I digress. How does a true Scout react in the same situation? The Scout opens all his senses, not simply those he has selected as "appropriate" to the situation, and expands his awareness to include everything around him. How can you know in advance what will and will not be important in a given situation, I ask you? The Scout sees the same things as the tracker, but he sees more. He sees the broken branch ahead, but he also sees, beyond that, the change in coloration of the undergrowth that indicates the ground is growing softer. He hears what might be stealthy movement to his right, but he also hears—again, to his right—the soft murmur of the wind and the twittering of songbirds. He feels the stirring of the air around him, and the faintest of vibrations through the springy ground beneath his feet. He smells the sweet scent of flax flower fruit on the breeze, mixed with the sharp tang of human sweat. He chews a blade of grass he picks from the ground at his feet, and tastes the bitterness of peat. The Scout opens himself up to the forest around him, and he becomes the forest.

How are these perceptions relevant? Think on it a moment. A broken branch implies his quarry is ahead of him, yet he knows that the ground softens ahead and to the right—in fact, it becomes a peat bog, the grass stem tells him that. Will his quarry risk becoming stuck in a bog? No—it will almost certainly turn to the left. What of the noise to the right, then, the sound the tracker interpreted as stealthy movement? The wind, no doubt, for the songbirds to his right would surely have fallen silent with the passage of a large beast. The Scout also knows that a human is in the vicinity—possibly tracking the same quarry—and hence will be careful to identify his target before letting fly with his weapon. Do you understand now? That is the difference between a Scout and a simple tracker.

Can you imagine the sheer joy a Scout finds in this oneness with his surroundings? Only another Scout can understand the joy—the transcendence—of running or flying through a dappled woodland, passing as silently as a ghost, leaving no trace behind of your passage. Practicing the Discipline of the Scout allows the adept to grasp the halcyon days of legend, when peace and tranquility lay upon the world. When we walk in the forest, we are a part of it—as much as the trees that shelter us, and the birds that sing for us, and the animals that watch us without fear. So too are we a part of the rolling plains, or the harsh and rugged uplands, or even the arid deserts. Wherever there is life, there we are at home.

By opening our senses to our environment, we Scouts accept the world around us. We do not try to change it. We view it as it is and we work within the constraints this places on us. The

environment "accepts" a Scout, just as the Scout "accepts" the environment. Why? I know not why. Perhaps a sage or Wizard could tell you. I only know that it is true. Because we are as one, the environment around us reacts as though we belong wherever we are. Think on it. How else could a Scout move silently through the wilderness, or through the alleys of a city, come to that? A woodsman or tracker might learn the art of parting branches so leaves do not rustle, of treading lightly so no twigs break underfoot. But there is more to moving silently than that. What good does it do to stir no twig if all the birds and animals of the forest around you proclaim your presence—either with their cries or with their silence? The best tracker or woodsman is still an interloper in the environment through which he passes, and the world knows this. When a Scout moves silently, he is one with the world around him. He senses the lay of the land, the interconnections between branches, the direction of the wind. But more importantly, the world around him senses him and accepts him as part of itself.

Adepts from other Disciplines can learn these techniques to some degree, but never will they attain the level of proficiency enjoyed by a true Scout adept. For though the windling gives the subject short shrift, the Scout's enhanced perceptions are supported by magic, and one who has not dedicated himself to the Discipline must do without this significant boon.

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of the City of Iopos

I have heard tell that some Scouts go to great lengths to avoid traveling in the Wastes. Why, they will not say. My suspicion is that their powerful bond with the world puts them at risk within the Wastes, at the very least becoming one with such corruption must be a painful and disconcerting experience.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

A Discourse on Other Environments

Do not allow yourself to accept the common misconception that a Scout is at home only in the wilderness, far from the works of Namegivers. We are as much at home and at ease in the heart of a teeming city as we are in the midst of an unexplored forest. Think on it a moment. We become one with our environment by opening our senses to it. Will the same technique not work as well in an environment constructed by Namegivers? Of course it will!

The clues in a city are very different from those of the wilderness—the tone of voice and the unspoken communications of passers-by, the patterns of traffic on streets, the condition of the buildings and roads in different neighborhoods, and the like. Yet the technique of opening oneself to those clues is exactly the same. If one can be aware of the scent of ripening goldenrod on the rolling plains, one can also be aware of the cooking fires and braziers of a town and extract from them their meaning.

The Scout's unique ability to "belong" is as strong in a city or town as it is in the wilderness, as well. (In fact, thinking on how "belonging" occurs in a town will go some distance toward explaining how it happens in the countryside as well.)

How do you recognize someone as a stranger to your village, town or city? Perhaps you note that you have never seen their face before, but that is rarely a sufficient clue. In all but the smallest of villages, residents encounter "strangers"—those whom they have never met before. Yet they still recognize these strangers as local residents, rather than "outsiders." The major clues come from the individual's actions—the way he carries himself, the way he communicates, the way he reacts.

An individual who does not belong where he is communicates his outsider status with every movement. Making his way through the town, he becomes lost and hesitates while he regains his bearings. Unfamiliar sights and sounds startle him. He senses that he is apart—different—from the locals who surround him, and he communicates that feeling to those with eyes to see the clues in the very lines of his body. It is these clues that identify strangers among us.

Do we notice someone who is totally at home in the environment of our town or village? Of course not—he does not give off any such clues.

In this way, Scouts fit into the masses of Namegivers in a city or a town. If the birds of the forest believe that we belong, how difficult would it be to convince the people of an unfamiliar town of the same thing?

I once had reason to hire a Scout to serve me as an infiltrator. Through intermediaries, I made arrangements for the best candidate—an ork, as it turned out—to meet with me at the noon bell in my audience chamber. The noon bell rang, and the candidate failed to appear. I waited, as the time-candle burned away. Beside me, my three hand servants stood, shifting from foot to foot as they sensed my growing anger. Finally, just as I was about to give up, one of my "hand servants" stepped forward and introduced himself as the Scout I was to meet! Needless to say, I hired him on the spot.

—Tannis Denairastas of the City of Iopos

On Specialists

There are two main specialties within the Discipline of the Scout, quite naturally based on the environments in which the Scout operates. Those who develop to a fine edge their ability to work in the wilderness are called explorers. Those who focus on locales where Namegivers dwell are called infiltrators.

The difference between the two "specialties" lies only in the concrete, tangible skills each type of adept learns. The underlying aptitude for opening the senses to the world around them remains the same.

Adepts of one specialty often look with some degree of scorn on those who follow the other. Infiltrators, for example, consider the environment chosen by explorers to be woefully simplistic and infinitely less challenging than that in which they themselves excel. (After all, these specialists would argue, Namegivers have much the same instincts as the beasts of the wild—but they also have intellect, and no small degree of suspicion and paranoia! To move unnoticed among Namegivers, to them, offers a much greater challenge.)

In contrast, explorers hold themselves as more worthy because they deal with nature, with the "true world." Infiltrators, these Scouts contend, deal with a false and arbitrary model of nature, and so are closing themselves off from the broadness and richness of the greater world around them.

Those Scouts such as I, who have chosen no specialty within our Discipline, typically stay out of such arguments!

It is possible to subdivide Scout adepts further based on the type of wilderness where they operate, in other words, those who hone their arts in the forest, or in the desert, or in the rugged foothills form subgroups. To me, this distinction seems unimportant, though there are those who strongly disagree with this opinion.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

On Combat and Other Skills

Many Scouts are as skilled in the use of melee weapons as a Warrior adept, while others can put an arrow through an opponent's eye just like an Archer. Others still can pick a lock or disarm a trap as proficiently as a Thief adept. How then, do Scouts excel at certain skills usually viewed as skills of other Disciplines?

Though the outcomes of the use of these skills may appear the same as for other Disciplines, the way a Scout uses them is very different, for the use of these skills stems from the Scout's world view. As I understand it—and any Warriors reading my words must forgive my ignorance—Warrior adepts excel at combat by learning forms and styles of attack and honing their reactions and their instincts, until they can react to a foe's move instinctively. Thief adepts learn to pick locks or disarm traps by studying the mechanisms by which locks and traps function and practicing specific techniques for defeating those mechanisms. Archer adepts know how to understand the arrow, not merely shoot it.

When a Scout is faced with such tasks—single combat, for example, or opening a locked door—we approach it with a different mental outlook. As when we are moving silently through the wilderness, we open our senses—all our senses—to the clues presented to us. From these clues, we can build up a mental picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the obstacle before us, whether it be a swordsman or a lock. When it comes time to act, we focus all our attention and energy on the weaknesses we have detected.

On Training

Scouts learn much of their chosen Discipline by simply living the precepts of the path. Though this method of learning is quite natural and effective, many outside the path fail to understand it. They imagine that our instruction involves specific skills and techniques—"stealth," for example, or perhaps "spoor identification." Well, a Scout's training may contain some of that. But the most important facet of training is helping the initiate develop the Scout's world view, the ability to perceive unhampered by his unconscious limitations. In other words, to help the initiate strip away his preconceived ideas of the world and "see" it as it truly is. All else springs from this.

Most Namegiver races emphasize sight over all other senses. The first thing that a would-be Scout must learn is to eliminate this unnecessary reliance on a single sense. All senses are of equal importance in the grand scheme. Certainly, on specific occasions, one sense may offer the most vital information, but to focus exclusively and invariably on one sense is to limit yourself severely. One of the most important lessons I teach to initiates involves temporarily removing their sense of sight. So many students I have led through the woods blindfolded, forcing them to reach out with their other senses to avoid a painful collision or a jarring tumble!

The vast majority of the training I provide has the same goal—extending and broadening perception. Unlike the training of a Swordmaster, for example, I often simply walk with a student through a new environment—through the forest, or in the mountains, or in the midst of a bustling city—and help direct his attention

and sharpen his focus with questions. Quite a contrast to the way most people envision a Scout's training, I am sure!

Certainly, sometimes I help a student work on specific, tangible skills. But such task-oriented training can come only after the student has sufficiently extended his perceptions. For teaching a student how to exploit the weakness in a swordsman's style before the student can accurately identify that weakness—well, there are less complicated forms of suicide, but few less sure.

Scouts and the Passions

Individual Scouts can revere any and all Passions. Among those members of my Discipline I number as friends, however, Lochost, Mynbruje, and, to a certain degree, Jaspree enjoy especial regard. Lochost may, at first glance, seem an odd choice for a Scout, but think on it a moment. Lochost's primary ideal is freedom, and "freedom" can mean freedom from past beliefs and prejudices as easily as physical freedom. The very nature of the Scout Discipline requires this kind of mental and spiritual freedom. A would-be Scout constrained by old ways of thought can not truly open himself to the world around him.

Many Scouts I have encountered take the physical aspect of freedom very seriously as well.

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of the City of Iopos

Two of the ideals of Mynbruje are compassion and empathy. Scouts who seek to move without notice through towns and villages must demonstrate great compassion and empathy, making this Passion a logical choice for reverence. Still other Scouts seem to follow Jaspree almost as a consequence of their work in the wilderness, for one cannot become one with the wilderness without coming to love the wilderness to some degree.

A Scout who worked predominantly as an infiltrator presented that same argument to me, but he was explaining why he followed the precepts of Garlen.

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of the City of Iopos

Game Information

Specialists

The Discipline of the Scout knows two specialists that distinguish themselves by the surroundings they most naturally fit into, the Infiltrator and the Explorer.

The Infiltrator walks more confidently among Namegivers. He exchanges the positions of his Silent Walk and Wilderness Survival Talents (Silent Walk becoming a First Circle Discipline Talent, Wilderness Survival becoming an Initiate Talent Option); and he exchanges the positions of his Disguise Self and Navigation Talents (Disguise Self now being his Third Circle Discipline Talent, Navigation being available as a Novice Talent Option).

The Explorer connects more easily to the natural world. He exchanges the positions of the Creature Analysis and Speak Language Talents (Creature Analysis becoming the Second Circle Discipline Talent, Speak Language becoming available from the Initiate Talent Options); and he exchanges positions of the Evidence Analysis and Sense Danger Talents (Sense Danger becoming the Fifth Circle Discipline Talent, Evidence Analysis going into Journeyman Talent Options pool).

Roleplaying Hints

Scouts are a generally curious lot, interested in discovering what lies beyond the next hill. The simple precept "tread lightly" tends to govern their actions; the Scout who can achieve his goals with the least disruption to the world is truly living in accordance with his Discipline.

Justly proud of their abilities, many Scouts consider themselves superior to those who "blunder blindly through the world." This sense of superiority actually prevents Scouts from becoming lone wolves; while they rarely acknowledge it to those outside their Discipline, many Scouts enjoy having an audience of people who marvel at their ability to move through city streets or trackless wilds as though they had always lived there.

Though Scouts can fight, most of them avoid combat if they can. The saying, "Violence is the first resort of the incompetent," finds a place in many a Scout's personal vision. Many Scouts join merchant caravans or adventuring parties specifically seeking a chance to lead their charges through danger while avoiding direct conflict.

Discipline Violations

A talent crisis is a particularly harrowing experience for a Scout. He generally feels cut off from the world around him, as blind and deaf to subtle clues of his environment as ordinary "stumblers." As usual, the exact triggers for a talent crisis vary with the adept's personal vision, but common violations include the Scout failing to "tread lightly" on the world. As a Deed of Atonement, the Scout usually finds a way to set right any harm to the world he may have caused. For example, an adept who has damaged land he has traveled through might devote himself to repairing that damage. Alternatively, a Scout may set himself a particularly challenging version of his Karma ritual—one that will require all of his skills and abilities and involves great personal risk.

TALENTS AND ABILITIES

WARDEN

Talent Options: Eagle Eye, Life Check, Lifesight, Poison Resistance, Sense Poison, Spot Armor Flaw, Tiger Spring, Trace Missile

Ninth Circle

Blend: Taking 2 Strain, the adept can blend in with his surroundings, with an effect identical to that of the Earth Blend spell (***Player's Guide***, p. 165). The adept makes a Scout Weaving Test in place of a spell Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty to spot him. The effect lasts for up to 24 hours, or until the adept moves.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Endure Cold

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: True Sight

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Defense

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Detect Falsehood

MASTER

Talent Options: Bestial Resilience, Elemental Walk, Multi-Tongue, Netherwalk, Plant Shelter, Vital Strike

Thirteenth Circle

One with the World: For 3 Strain, the adept may become a natural part of the environment he is in. This means he will appear as if he were a native, or completely accepted denizen, of the place he is in. He will appear to fit into the flow of a city and be naturally about its business or move in the wilderness as one who owns it and has a right to be doing whatever he is doing. In some cases, this may render the adept not-worth-mentioning to those who ask about outsiders and the like. Unless the adept does something extremely out of character for his role, no one will ever have a doubt he does not belong in the chosen environment. This ability lasts up to 24 hours, or until the adept ends it (as even his allies will not necessarily recognize him).
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Echo Location

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Chameleon

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Second Chance

RITUALS OF ADVANCEMENT

Many Scouts are part of an exploratory organization during their early career, or act in reconnaissance roles for militaries or their homeland tribes. Such organizations offer formal ceremonies for advancement and easier access to teachers, as long as the Scout's Circle is still low. For Scouts outside of such an organization, a higher Circle Scout (often the same one who trained the adept) sets the adept some task or challenge that will require him to demonstrate his newly learned abilities.

Recruitment: In the course of their travels, Scouts often encounter or hear of young men and women who have what it takes to enter the Discipline (these candidates may have reputations as "natural woodsmen" or something similar). Scouts interested in recruiting new students organize competitions in which the candidates must follow the Scout through the wilderness. Any candidate who succeeds in following the Scout's trail can become a recruit, if he so wishes. Recruits often work under a master's tutelage for years before they reach First Circle.

Novice (Circles 2–4): When their masters judge that adepts are ready to advance to these Circles, they often invite the recruits to participate in elaborate competitions that resemble a combination of a race and a scavenger hunt. Clues leading from one checkpoint to the next along the course are concealed in various ways, so that only those participants who are intensely aware of their surroundings can reach the end. Higher-Circle Scouts observe these competitions and note those adepts who have mastered the talents required for advancement to the next Circle. These competitions take place within towns and cities as often as in the wilderness.

Journeyman (Circles 5–8): The instructor of a Scout advancing to this level hides in some safe haven—in the wilderness, in a town, or in a city—and takes steps to conceal and protect himself that are appropriate to the student adept's level of training (physical traps, obstacles, or even hired guards). The prospective journeyman must find his instructor, infiltrate any defenses, and acquire something (a tangible object, information available only through closely observing the instructor, and so on) before making his escape.

Warden (Circles 9–12): Adepts advancing to these Circles test their own talents to satisfy themselves.

Ghost Master Ritual: The adept meditates on his chosen ghost master. During the meditation, he sees a vision of a certain location, with sketchy details that he perceives using several senses in addition to sight. The adept must travel to this location, overcoming any and all obstacles in the process. When the adept reaches the site, the ghost master appears and the ritual proceeds as normal.

DISCIPLINE COMBINATIONS

Because the Scout Discipline requires abilities similar to those of Archers and Thieves, both Disciplines are common secondary choices. The Cavalryman is another complementary choice; it grants greater mobility, and expands the Scout's perceptions to include those of his bonded mount. Explorers often feel a kinship with the natural world that draws them to the Beastmaster Discipline.

Swordmasters are perhaps the least common secondary Discipline. Most Scouts feel Swordmasters tend to concentrate too much on standing out from the environment, instead of blending in with it, and approach combat in far too self-absorbed a way. Scouts also tend to avoid the Illusionist Discipline, which alters reality rather than accepting and embracing it, and the Nethermancer Discipline, which is too often concerned with the astral realms beyond.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE FIERCE AND HONORABLE WAY OF THE SKY RAIDER

The following text was transcribed from a conversation with the human Sky Raider known as Merienne Blays. Readers will note a predominance of words from the troll language used throughout this text. This tradition has its roots in the origins of the Sky Raider Discipline, which was first practiced by trolls. Over time, the trolls shared their Discipline with the other Namegiver races. With the knowledge of the Sky Raider Discipline came many terms and ideas so integral to the troll race that no adequate translation was possible. Where appropriate in this text, I and my fellow scholars have attempted to explain, or at least describe, such words. In this endeavor I am especially indebted to Thom Edrull, whose work on the Denizens of Barsaive *series granted him such a vast expertise in such matters.*

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

11

OF A LIFE IN THE SKIES

You look askance at me, my dwarf friend. Why? Because I, a human and a female, claim to be a Sky Raider? I admit, the term Sky Raider brings the image of a large, burly male troll to the minds of most Namegivers. But there is more to being a Sky Raider than race or gender, much more. The true Sky Raider is marked by his attitude—a zest for life and for challenge and for adventure. To be a Sky Raider is to be, well, the trollish word my instructor used is *galan'kaharr*; I can think of no direct translation in the dwarf tongue.

A partial translation for galan'kaharr might be "agent"—one who acts, rather than one who is acted upon. This translation captures the core meaning but does no justice to the far-reaching emotional resonance of the original troll word.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Say what you will, only a troll can truly understand the path of the Sky Raider. Only a troll knows the true meaning of galan'kaharr, and only a troll can truly live it.

—Zurc of the Stoneclaws

To be a Sky Raider is to be free—to be completely independent, to follow one's own desires wherever they may lead, to be responsible to oneself and oneself alone. It is that freedom we seek when we take to the skies in our ships. It is that freedom we pursue when we wander abroad with the earth far below our feet.

That freedom is an integral part of troll culture—of highland troll culture, at least. It is the troll way to fling oneself wholeheartedly into life, to leave moderation for the races with weaker blood flowing sluggishly through their veins. This is why so many trolls become Sky Raiders, and why so many Sky Raiders are trolls. Members of other races who turn to the Sky Raider Discipline share this attitude. It is this world view that attracts them. It should come as no surprise, then, that many who follow the way of the Sky Raider also embrace other aspects of troll culture and incorporate them into our personal vision. Honor is of great importance—of overwhelming importance, in fact—to Sky Raiders of any race, as it is to highland trolls. Personal honor—that which the trolls call *katorr*—is predominant, though a modified version of *kat'ral* is also important. While a highland troll will defend the *kat'ral* of his clan or family, a Sky Raider of any race will defend the "group honor" of her crew, her colleagues, or the adventuring group to which she belongs.

Honor, for a Sky Raider, is inextricably linked with the idea of remaining *galan'kaharr*. Anyone who constrains a Sky Raider's freedom to act is slighting her honor—both *katorr* and *kat'ral*. There is nothing so demeaning to a Sky Raider as surrendering her freedom of action. We must remain free to follow our own judgment and to take complete and total responsibility for our own lives. Otherwise, where is the value of continued breath? One might as well lie down in one's grave, even before breath has finally stilled. To forsake responsibility is to turn away from life itself.

This is worth of emphasis. Kat'ral is generally defined as clan or family honor. Sky Raiders often redefine their clan or family based on intent or goals rather than simple blood ties. Thus, a Sky Raider considers the crewmates who sail with her on a drakkar to be her family.

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

Actually, that freedom can be taken away—by various magics that control the mind and the will. To be treated as a puppet is the ultimate insult against katorr and kat'ral—an insult most commonly answered with homicidal rage.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

A Discourse on Responsibility

The central tenet of a Sky Raider's life is individual responsibility. I am responsible for all that befalls me during my life—I and I alone. Certainly, circumstances beyond my control may seem to put restrictions on my freedom; an unforeseen storm might ground my ship, for example. Yet, even in the midst of the storm, I have the freedom to respond as I choose. Do I vainly curse the storm and despair? Or do I embrace the challenge and the danger, and pit my skills against the forces of Nature? It is my choice as to how I respond, and that freedom can never be taken from me.

People outside my Discipline often seem to believe that Sky Raiders are chaos incarnate, walking examples of anarchy. How can anyone trust an individual who puts personal freedom above all else, these people ask. Think it through, my dwarf friend, please. Individual freedom and personal responsibility do not preclude enlightened self-interest. Quite the opposite, in fact. As I see it, we—Sky Raiders such as myself—are less motivated by broad ideologies and belief systems than members of other Disciplines. We approach all decisions on the basis of individual responsibility.

Many people seem to believe that Sky Raiders possess an almost instinctive rejection of restrictions and guidelines and flout the laws of civilized societies at every turn. Not true! People who break all laws without thinking are as shortsighted as those who blindly follow all laws and restrictions. Sky Raiders typically examine each case on its own merits. If we believe a law or constraint is worthwhile, we will abide by it. If we believe it to be foolish or inappropriate, we will ignore it. In both cases, we take complete and personal responsibility for our decision. If I break a law, I am ready to take responsibility for that action. When I made my decision, I took into account the possible consequences, and I will face those consequences undismayed. That is one of the characteristics of individual responsibility. The central touchstone of my actions is my personal judgment. Do you understand me a little better now?

On Working with Others

It has been said—and is widely believed, in some circles—that Sky Raiders are incapable of cooperating with other Namegivers. How foolish that would be if it were true! Enlightened self-interest frequently makes cooperation necessary—no, essential. I recognize and respect my talents and abilities. But I also recognize that my individual talents are sometimes insufficient to achieve a goal I have deemed worthy. To achieve that goal, I must work alongside others, whose talents and skills complement mine.

I personally choose to believe that all those around me share my own views on individual responsibility and choice. Perhaps I am wrong to make this assumption, but so far the course I have set through life has proven to be a good one. Always I assume that those with whom I deal are honorable and responsible for their own actions—unless they prove otherwise. I deal in good faith with anyone, until the time I learn they are dealing in bad faith. Then I will re-examine the situation. Sometimes I just walk away from the honorless toad. Other times I may decide that retribution or—education—is in order. To use more colloquial terms, I will give a storm wolf one bite—but only one!

Honor—both *katorr* and *kat'ral*—require that a Sky Raider be true to her word. Her oath, once given, is binding. Honor is all that we have when we enter this world, and all we take with us when we leave it. To lessen that honor—by forswearing ourselves, for example—is to diminish who we are. Of course, most Sky Raiders are wise enough to know that the best way of keeping our word is not to give it lightly.

The reader must be aware that this is Merienne Blay's personal approach. Some Sky Raiders may share her course; others may chart a different route.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

An interesting contrast, is it not? A contrast and a contradiction. Conventional wisdom holds that Sky Raiders are capriciousness personified. Yet it also holds that a Sky Raider's word, once given, is binding …

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

On Loyalty to Ship and Crew

Not all Sky Raiders have ships or belong to a drakkar crew. After all, there are many more Sky Raiders than there are berths aboard the airships of Barsaive. Thus, a Sky Raider must earn his position on a drakkar crew.

Once a Sky Raider is granted a berth, her definition of *kat'ral* changes. She defines her crewmates as members of her "clan," whether or not they are related to her by blood. But she also defines the ship itself as part of her clan. A slight against a Sky Raider's ship is a slight against her own honor, both *katorr* and *kat'ral*. She will—indeed, she must—redress any such insult! This is why Sky Raiders feel such seemingly inordinate pride in the appearance and skyworthiness of their ship. Their drakkar is a visible manifestation of their own honor. A dirty, ill-maintained ship reflects a crew that lacks personal honor.

Once a Sky Raider has become part of a drakkar's crew, she will give her life to protect her ship. For losing that ship—whether or not through fault of her own—is the greatest of all dishonors. A Sky Raider who has joined a ship's company and then loses that ship is dispossessed and disgraced.

This is true even when the drakkar is owned by a troll Sky Raider's home moot. To receive a berth as a crew member is a great honor, and one that is not bestowed lightly.

—Chag Skat

Many Sky Raiders who travel with adventuring groups view their fellow adventurers as crewmates for the purposes of kat'ral. The Name and the pattern of the adventuring group take the place of the ship in the Sky Raider's world view. Slights against the group are taken as personal insults. Once a Sky Raider has joined a group, to lose that group—for whatever reason—leaves her "dispossessed and disgraced," as Blays describes above.

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

On Raiding

Why do Sky Raiders raid? A common question. Some claim that Sky Raiders are heartless, soulless raptors who will kill and destroy to take from another. But we do not view ourselves this way. (I, at least, do not view myself this way.) As we are responsible for our own fortunes, so too are our foes responsible for theirs. In essence, we believe that others are worthy of possessing something—land, food, wealth, even life itself—only if they can defend that possession. Our raids grant our foes the opportunity to prove they are worthy. If our foes fight well but fall, we respect them. If they defeat us and drive us off, we respect them. Only if they fail to fight do we fail to respect them. Our foes do us honor when they fight to repel our raids. To simply surrender—to give up without a fight—is to abdicate their own honor and do us a mortal insult in the process!

That is why we do not hate other moots or clans who raid ours. We defend what we have to the death; we kill those who assail us. But we do not hate them, even as we slay them. If we go down to defeat, it is our responsibility. Our failure—our death—weighs on us, not on those who attacked us.

A typically troll view of the world, I must remark. Something about the Discipline of the Sky Raider carries with it a troll approach to life. Humans, even dwarfs, who follow this Discipline seem, in many ways, to become like smaller versions of trolls.

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

Of Sky Raiders and the Passions

Ask one outside our Discipline which Passion Sky Raiders revere above all others, and the answer will almost universally be Thystonius. This Passion receives due reverence from many Sky Raiders because personal honor and valor—ideals of Thystonius—are closely held in many of our hearts. Our zest for living, our love of the opportunity to prove ourselves against threats and challenges—these things echo the precepts of Thystonius.

Yet think on it. From what I have told you, what other Passion would find a place in our hearts?

If you ventured Lochost, you are right. For Lochost is the patron of rebellion, change and freedom. Lochost strives ever against enslavement—whether physical enslavement as practiced by the hated Therans, or mental and emotional enslavement represented by the restrictive societies of the lowlands. To be enslaved—physically or otherwise—is, for a Sky Raider, a fate worse than death. There is no more heinous crime against us than to deny us the ability to be *galan'kaharr*. Do you understand that, my friend? Better to kill us then to enslave our bodies or our souls.

On Training

Trolls generally enter the Sky Raider Discipline through their trollmoot. Many highland moots have their own drakkars, and young trolls who wish to follow the Discipline of the Sky Raider will dedicate themselves early on to earning a berth aboard these vessels. Trolls from outside a moot are sometimes invited to join the Discipline, though only those who have already proven themselves in combat and shown the honor and sense of responsibility that distinguish Sky Raiders. Such *newots*, even once they have been accepted into the Discipline, must still prove themselves worthy of a berth aboard the moot's vessel, of course.

And what of *no'a'ul* such as myself? The usual avenues for joining the Sky Raider Discipline are denied to us. We are part of no trollmoot, and no troll Sky Raider would deign to seek out *no'a'ul* candidates for membership in the Discipline. In all but the most exceptional of cases, we must seek out an instructor and convince him or her to accept us as student and would-be adept.

It is true, my friend, that few *no'a'ul* become Sky Raiders. How could it be otherwise? So few outside the troll race understand what it is to be a Sky Raider. Why would someone seek to follow a Discipline that he cannot fully understand?

The word no'a'ul is a troll designation—not necessarily insulting, but not overly respectful either—for members of other Namegiver races, except for obsidimen, of course, who are referred to as ago'al—rock brothers.

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

Yet there are those—I among them—who feel the stirrings of personal honor and responsibility in their souls when they are children, who understood—imperfectly, it is true, and without knowing the correct word—the concept of *galan'kaharr*. These few sometimes learn enough of the Discipline to understand that only within its ways can they find true soul-mates, fellows who share their view of the world. These would-be Sky Raiders usually have little choice but to trek to the highlands and locate a trollmoot where Sky Raiders are trained. Then they must find an instructor and impress him with their desire to join the Discipline.

How? Almost invariably by combat, of course.

I myself located my mentor among the members of a moot in the Twilight Peaks. A large and grizzled troll, he was, renowned for his ferocity in combat and his unshakable sense of honor. I told him what I wished from him—indoctrination in the Sky Raider Discipline—and he laughed in my face. So I challenged him to single combat then and there. He refused my challenge! (This was the most insulting action he could possibly have taken, of course.) So I hurled myself at his throat, disdaining the weapons that hung on my belt, and I tried my level best to slay him.

The outcome was preordained, of course. It took me a fortnight to recover from the drubbing I received. Throughout my convalescence, however, I bore my wounds with a stoicism that must have impressed him. When I could walk and wield a weapon again, he came to me and asked me if I would undertake a challenge. I accepted immediately, without asking the nature of that challenge. (I understand now that this was the turning point in our relationship. Had I asked to know the challenge before I accepted, I do not believe he would have offered me training.)

My challenge was to stage a raid—alone!—against a neighboring earthbound clan. I was to assault their moothome and return with a trophy: a weapon taken from the hand of one of the moothome's guards! Only when I returned with that trophy—and return I did, my friend, bloody and scarred but triumphant—did my mentor agree to undertake my training.

Concerning Ongoing Training

In the years since, I have enjoyed the honor of training Sky Raiders of lower Circles than myself. (The greatest honor has come when trolls—not fellow *no'a'ul* like myself—have come to me requesting instruction!) The principle that I have followed—which I learned from my first instructor—is that the responsibility for learning lies with the student, not with the instructor. The student must decide what specific skills and talents she needs to learn, and then the student petitions her instructor for the training she requires. While I may provide guidance if specifically asked, it is not my place to decide how a student's training is to proceed.

I believe wholeheartedly that the greatest service I can provide to a student is to teach by example. When the drakkar on which I serve undertakes a raid, I will invite my student to fight alongside me in the fray. When we labor to maintain the ship, she works alongside me. When my duty leads me to handle the rigging or take the tiller, my student will be beside me there as well. The greatest lesson I can offer her is to show how a true Sky Raider faces the challenges of life.

Not all elders follow this scheme, of course. My friend E'Tal Goldeneye tells me that his first instructor, who recruited him into the Discipline, was the harshest of taskmasters, ordering E'Tal around as though he was a hand servant. This elder constantly set him to undertake menial tasks and exhausting exercises and punished him for even the slightest flaw in his performance. For months E'Tal labored under his harsh discipline, striving to prove himself worthy to be declared a member of the First Circle. On the day that E'Tal finally refused his teacher's orders and declared that this servitude was unacceptable, the elder smiled and said, "You have passed the test. Now you are a true Sky Raider!"

Game Information

Roleplaying Hints

Responsibility and honor represent a Sky Raider's primary motivation, though each Sky Raider will have their own definitions of these concepts. For many, the concepts are intertwined; a Sky Raider behaves honorably by taking responsibility for his own life and destiny. No Sky Raider willingly does anything that might tarnish his personal definition of honor—though he rarely cares whether others view his actions as honorable or dishonorable. Once a Sky Raider gives his oath on any matter, he will not break it.

Because a Sky Raider often sees honor and responsibility as two sides of the same coin, he rarely shows compassion for the troubles of others unless those others are clearly striving against their misfortunes with all their strength. Those who blame their lot in life on fate or circumstance rather than taking personal responsibility for their condition are dishonorable by definition, and therefore unworthy of sympathy or aid.

Likewise, a Sky Raider will refrain from interfering if his companion seems about to break his own oath. Responsibility is an individual matter, and the companion must choose for himself whether or not to be an "honorless toad." On the other hand, a Sky Raider who sees the "weak" or "underprivileged" fighting to better themselves, or to free themselves from the yoke of an oppressor, may well devote himself wholeheartedly to their cause.

Some Sky Raiders view adepts of other Disciplines with scorn, because in their opinion they have chosen to follow a "lesser" path. Other Sky Raiders offer adepts of other Disciplines an indulgent understanding and sympathy; they may have made a "lesser" choice,

Raider Clans

Optional Rule: Many Sky Raiders have connections to troll clans, often of the famed crystal raiders. Most Sky Raiders originate from such a clan or received their training from a member of a clan who was on travels. Sometimes, Sky Raiders seek out connections to a clan even if they had no prior contact to one, as the path of the Sky Raider has its roots in the culture of the troll clans, and understanding their society means understanding one's way better. Players and gamemasters who want to incorporate this aspect into their games can make use of this optional guideline.

Sky Raiders with connections to a troll clan or moot find it easier to find a trainer for Circle advancement by visiting the moot—and most often training comes more cheaply, as the troll clans live outside of the larger Barsaivian society and have less need for money. The adept is also bound by certain obligations, however. They are frequently asked to support that clan, which can mean participating in raids, caring for the airships, striking against the hated Therans, or supplying the clan with some much needed goods that are only available in more "civilized" areas. In actual play, this means that while training is easier to locate and cheaper, the character spends more time with tasks demanded before training, or undergoes greater risks.

but in taking responsibility for their own path they have demonstrated a basic understanding of honor.

Discipline Violations

For many Sky Raiders, personal honor is the focus of their Discipline, and the worst possible violation of personal honor is to break an oath. To do so often triggers a talent crisis, the severity depending on the circumstances under which the act took place. Relinquishing personal responsibility or doing anything to besmirch their honor may also trigger a talent crisis.

Most Sky Raiders can easily think up an appropriate Deed of Atonement; very often they simply do something to fix the problem immediately, and damn the consequences. To make up for turning aside from a challenge, for example, the Sky Raider must track down the challenger and settle the matter. A Sky Raider who relinquishes his personal responsibility must somehow take the reins of his life back into his own hands, and often chooses to do so in a direct, blatant, and violent way.

Rituals of Advancement

Sky Raider rituals almost always involve some type of physical conflict. The adept must acquire some trophy of the battle to prove that he successfully completed the ritual.

Recruitment: Almost all Sky Raiders enter the Discipline through their trollmoot. Very rarely, *newots* will be invited to join the Discipline. Other non-trolls must seek out Sky Raiders for training into that Discipline, because Sky Raiders never recruit among the other Namegiver races.

Novice (2–4): The adept participates in a raid and secures a trophy that earns admiration from an elder.

Journeyman (5–8): When not actively warring on each other, rival troll clans meet in (theoretically) bloodless competitions, matching their strength in wrestling, stick fighting, footraces, and so on. To gain respect from the elders in such a contest or in an actual war with the rival clan, the adept must compete against opponents of an equal or higher Circle.

Warden (9–12): The adept commands a raid against a worthy and well-defended target.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Sky Raider draws a circle on the deck of a docked airship. While seated in this circle, he envisions leading a raid against insurmountable opposition. In his imagination he defeats the enemy, or perhaps dies honorably. After an hour of this positive thinking, the desired ghost master appears and applauds. The ritual continues as normal.

Discipline Combinations

Sky Raiders usually take on additional combat-oriented Disciplines whose precepts dovetail with their active, do-something-now view of the world. Common choices include the Swordmaster, Warrior, or Weaponsmith. Sky Raiders will not usually become Scouts, as the idea of "treading lightly" is alien to a Sky Raider's way of thinking; a Sky Raider usually wants to have an impact on the world around him—and the bigger, the better! Sky Raiders usually don't take up Disciplines that "delegate" their personal responsibility in some way. Beastmasters, Elementalists, Nethermancers, and even Wizards often rely too much on an outside force or agent.

Thieves and Air Sailors are both antithetical to the philosophy of the Sky Raider, and only in exceptional cases will they be taken on as secondary Disciplines. The stealth commonly required by the Thief stands in opposition to the Sky Raider's bold daring, and the Air Sailor's view of Sky Raiders as brutish barbarians is often taken as a slight against the Raider's honor

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Air Dance, Defense, Eagle Eye, Endure Cold, Frenzy, Poison Resistance, Shield Beater, Swing Attack

Ninth Circle

Strength of the Sky: The adept adds +3 to his Strength value.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thunder Axe

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Strength-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Storm Shield

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Vitality

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Weapon Breaker

Master

Talent Options: Champion Challenge, Ethereal Weapon, Howl, Lion Spirit, Missile Twister, Second Chance

Thirteenth Circle

Lightning Song: For 5 Strain, the adept can summon a fierce storm. The adept must be on an operating airship and call out or sing into the sky for 1 minute. He must then succeed at a Sky Weaving (20) Test. If successful, a severe storm forms around the adept's ship, stretching out to a radius of 1 mile around it. The storm does not affect the adept's ship and lasts for 1 hour, after which it begins to dissipate naturally. During that hour, the adept may at any time sing the song again for 1 minute, making an additional Sky Weaving Test afterwards. The Test Result is compared to the Spell Defense of all hostile airships in the area. Each ship whose Spell Defense is not higher takes Damage equal to a Willpower Test, no Armor protects against this Damage. Singing the Lightning Song only causes Strain the first time it is sung, not when sung during the hour the storm lasts.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Rally

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Critical Hit

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Mind Armor

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE DANCE OF THE SWORDMASTER

The following entry was supplied by the Swordmaster Elizabetta of Kaer Adelade, who won the bragging rights at the most recent Swordmaster Grand Tourney for her inspired and impeccably timed double-thrust against Kevar the Unimpressed. Her brilliant riposte in response to his cleverly-worded attack against her wit actually threw off Kevar's timing and allowed Elizabetta to cut away the fasteners of his shirt in one clean stroke. The Royal Library was honored by the Swordmaster's cooperation with our project, for she supplied one of the most entertaining and informative treatises we received.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

THE WORLD OF THE SWORDMASTER

It's all part of the dance! Live or die, it's all part of the dance when you're a Swordmaster. That is the first lesson I learned at the knee of my master. Other masters may claim it is all part of the tale, or song, or grand mischief—but no matter the wording, the meaning remains the same. This is not to say that the crafting of words is not as important as the tempering of your blade—far from it! Yet, basic truths remain the same no matter what frippery decorates them.

Jealous Warriors may scoff at our witty repartee and shake their heads at the elaborate spins of our bodies and flourishes of our swords. The besotted miscreants will never understand what it is to live in a world made more vibrant by one's very presence in it! It is no wonder that most Warriors dismiss us as overblown, vain-glorious blowhards. What the rheumy eyes of these lesser creatures perceive as flaws, we know to be the greatest merits of all. Allow me to elaborate for a moment on our philosophy.

For as long as I have danced in the footsteps of the Discipline, I have known that slaying an opponent, whether it be the foulest gore-spattered Horror or merely some backstabbing rogue in a dark alley, is a necessary evil. You wonder how one who makes his living by the sword can view its results as evil? Ah, but should you ask that question you have missed the point entirely. For though the act of killing may be as base as a one-course meal of birch broth, the act can be elevated to an art by a Swordmaster. We are the chefs of the sword, the iron-wielding elite of the blade! We carefully add our ingredients: a dash of acrobatics, a dollop of wit, a trace of timing, and a pinch of élan, until we have transformed that lowly birch broth into a nine-course feast!

Our swords are extensions of our bodies and our souls, but by themselves they mean little. For competing bravely in a tournament, exchanging witty repartee and pirouetting leaps with one's opponents, is pointless if one hunches silently in the meanest corner of the inn that evening. Battles, as with life itself, only hold meaning when shared with others. Even mean competition can be elevated in the sharing, but what about when the battle itself is glorious? Well, then, such an encounter—whether it was won or lost—adds to the world's glory. Just as all Namegivers create art to ward off Horror-taint, so too does creating glory from a tainted act serve to ward off the evil surrounding us. The Swordmaster's craft is a golden shield we hold forth to protect our world, and what could be more heroic than that? Merely to think on it sets my heart to singing!

You can see that our swords are more truly weapons of wit than of war. The Troubadour practices an honorable profession, but those adepts only tell the tale, whereas we Swordmasters create the tales we tell. And so every situation in the Swordmaster's life is a tableau fraught with possibilities for swashbuckling adventure, torrid romance, and great acts of heroism. Even such a mundane act as entering an inn can be made grand if one possesses style, and no Namegiver in water, earth, or air knows more of style than the Swordmasters.

This love of style makes us Swordmasters continually aware of how we appear to others—from the Passions themselves to the cows chewing cud by the trail. Though each of us cultivates our own unique style (but then, "style is always singular, never plural!" as Lilting Phineous was wont to say), all Swordmasters concern themselves equally with everything from the smallest details of appearance to the largest sweeps of our swords. Clothing, stance, walk, words, gestures, sighs—all are necessary accoutrements to draw to us the eyes of our audience. We must always strive to make the world more glorious, more virtuous, more true, by our presence in it.

This belief also explains why Swordmasters so often allow worthy opponents whom they have fought and bested, even many times over, to live to see another sunrise, to hear another poem, to woo another lover. We trade not in killing, but in theater! We

are artists sworn to craft our paintings with our bodies, hearts and minds. We live to create, not to destroy. Though our art may begin with the sword, it does not end there. If this world of ours is to grow ever more glorious in this new time, then we must not fall into the trap of becoming what we fear. We must rise above our own penchant for evil, great and small, while we remain ever vigilant to the multitude of threats to our fair world. It is an existence to be envied, is it not?

LIFE AS A SWORDMASTER

If life is a dance, then the Swordmaster is most certainly the belle of the ball. Just as our opulent finery and actions draw the attention of others to us, so does the world continually draw our attention to opportunities for saving a life or puncturing the so-called wit of a bore lacking his fair share of manners. Likewise, when faced with a dramatic situation in which our presence might prove invaluable in some way, most Swordmasters find it impossible to keep from interceding.

Many times this need to speak against injustices, to berate the morally bankrupt or leap to the aid of the weak, ends in our employing the skills for which we are named. Yet, on other occasions, we are drawn to less military solutions. I recall the time I first set eyes on young Captain Fettalan, with his dark cloak and iridescent green scales … what adventures can begin with a single sweep of the tail!

But before I get carried away in that Tale of a Tail (and I must admit that Captain Fettalan, who is an excellent Troubadour, tells it far better than I), I should remark that it is a measure of the Swordmaster's perspicacity, our keen perception, that enables us to identify injustices that others might not so easily recognize. True, some disgruntled souls claim that we create dramatic situations from thin air, but they would not—and could not—claim such beliefs if those unfortunate ones could even briefly see the world through our eyes. For those of you who sadly lack the required skills of heart, mind and body to become Swordmasters, let me assure you that we are just as compelled to act once we witness an injustice as we are to recognize such a need in the first place!

Thus, life for a Swordmaster is a series of daring escapades. When we are not throwing ourselves into the midst of adventure, we are girding for our next such encounter, or exchanging stories of previous exploits. Yet throughout all of this, we spend time learning and rehearsing the dance. The physical, mental, and emotional skills required of a Swordmaster are such that daily practice is a necessity we cannot long forego, lest the skills we have fought so long and hard to attain begin to dull.

Elizabetta speaks an important truth here, for the skilled arm of a Swordmaster is like a pot of boiling water. Remove it from the fire of practice and it becomes cold.

—Jontar, Swordmaster of Opar

ON FINDING ONE'S PATH

Swordmasters throughout the ages have woven their threads to many of the legendary swords in our world. Though all magic interests a Swordmaster, most of us wend our ways through life keeping at least half an eye on the quest to find and then bind our patterns to our perfect sword.

I know that many non-Swordmasters find this idea hard to fathom, but most Swordmasters believe that somewhere in the world there exists a magical sword that he alone (at least in this era) was meant to wield. Finding a soul sword and learning all its most intimate secrets—and then working with the weapon to create an even greater legend—is the most important quest of all Swordmasters. You may ask how we can tell that we have found the sword. I have not found mine yet, but I have been told many times that I will recognize it the moment I see it—perhaps even the moment I first hear its Name? It is undeniable that the most famous Swordmasters have been known as much for their swords as for themselves, and that both sword and master together weave themselves into legend.

The importance of a Swordmaster's blade can be stated in the simple words of the ancient maxim 'the sword makes the man.'

—Ruldo of Urupa

On the Art of Training

Long, hard, dusty, sweaty hours of labor are just as much a part of the Swordmaster's life as are velvety words and leaping glory, and very few Namegivers possess the particular combination of skills that makes it possible for them to even consider taking up the sword and following our Discipline. Learning if one's true way lies on the Glorious Road is made doubly difficult by the vast number of youths who dream of joining our ranks.

I can tell you from copious personal experience that an experienced Swordmaster often faces challenges issued by youngsters who believe they have what it takes to become an apprentice. Of course, all too many of these younglings see only the glittering, glib ease and effortlessness with which Swordmasters seem to move through life. They have no idea of the grime behind the glitter, of the constant sacrifices and effort needed to achieve such results. And so dismissing the most callow aspirants seldom requires much effort.

Even the masses of promising hopefuls contain few Swordmasters. This is one of the reasons most Swordmasters require that their apprentices promise to teach at least as many pupils during their lifetimes as years the apprentice spends under his master's training. Swordmasters rarely train more than one pupil at a time, for training an apprentice requires far too much of an instructor's energy and attention to successfully divide the effort between multiple students. Fortunately, once a new Swordmaster reaches the First Circle ("earns his sword," in the vernacular) the frequently held tournaments and contests, as well as his own efforts to train new apprentices, admirably supplement any additional training his master provides.

Taking Up the Gauntlet

What is it that prompts a Swordmaster to take on a particular pupil? It varies from adept to adept, but most aspirants to the Discipline would undoubtedly be surprised to learn that quick wit and a certain feistiness of spirit might be considered of greater importance than raw physical skill. This is not to say that Swordmasters will accept candidates who lack dexterity. Far from it! It is rather to say that the physical skills required in a potential apprentice are more common—and easier to teach—than the vigor, the innate sense of style and imagination that attracts a master's attention.

Such élan is nigh impossible to fake, and it shows itself in different ways with different candidates. This may be why some masters instruct a would-be apprentice to seek out a particular Swordmaster to challenge. We all favor a particular style, and most of us can recognize the true gift even if it runs counter to our own preferences. Thus, though I willingly teach particularly acrobatic youths who are equally eager to enter into a duel of wits as one of many weapons, another master may favor the youth with brilliant sword strokes who continually plays to the audience. Of course, the recruit need not best the Swordmaster in a duel to be accepted as an apprentice, else we would soon have no more Swordmasters!

If the would-be apprentice manages to impress the Swordmaster with his potential, the Swordmaster may "throw down his gauntlet" (a glove or other token) and offer his services as a trainer. By "taking up the gauntlet," the apprentice begins his new life as a swordsman. Older adepts often ask each other when they "took up the gauntlet," and a certain kinship often springs up among those who began their training in the same year. (It is tradition that when an adept discovers a compatriot of the same gauntlet year, he buys him a drink in honor of their brotherhood.)

The Tripled Blades

Once accepted as an apprentice Swordmaster, the recruit begins training. Most achieve First Circle after three years, though this basic training time varies widely. More talented or experienced recruits may reach First Circle after a few months, while others train for up to six years, which for us is the maximum length of apprenticeship.

Different masters favor different training styles. And though every Swordmaster uses unique variations in training his apprentices, almost all fall under one of the following three training philosophies, known as the Tripled Blades.

Flattery

It is often said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and Swordmasters who favor this style of training take this saying to heart. An adept trained in this manner learns his Discipline by imitating the verbal and physical stylings of his master. The recruit must learn to successfully imitate everything about his teacher, from how to dress and turn a phrase, to the type of sword and the parry-thrust combinations his master favors. Adepts trained in this manner are often among the most avid tournament goers, as they usually build their own styles by combining skills and ideas learned directly from other Swordmasters.

The Foil

The foil style of training may well be the most common of all forms. Here, recruits are taught to use their budding skills as a foil on which their master can build. The apprentice becomes the master's constant companion and uses his master's verbal cues and physical ripostes as pegs on which to hang his own skills of word and weapon. Likewise, he learns to provide openings that allow his teacher to wield his own skills more admirably. The foil style of training often produces adepts with skills and habits reminiscent of, but still distinct from, their masters'.

Contention

The final approach of the basic training styles is undoubtedly the least common. Swordmasters who favor the contention training style tend to be stern teachers, punish-

ing students who make errors with harsh behavior. Though this style is frowned on by some Swordmasters as stunting the vigor of recruits, it has been known to produce some very impressive young Swordmasters.

In the contention style of training, the master continually challenges his pupil. The Swordmaster goes over a skill a few times or, in some instances, simply tells the recruit to learn it. Just when the apprentice believes he is getting a handle on the skill or idea, the master challenges him in the most brutal way possible. Has the recruit just learned a new leap and parry combination? Why then, the master leaps at the pupil, sword in hand, just as the poor apprentice is finishing supper. Has the recruit recently begun to show a more biting wit? If so, he will undoubtedly soon be recovering from a blazing string of scathing insults. Though this method may seem harsh, certain apprentices thrive on the constant challenge, their anger and fear only tempering their resolve to become full-fledged Swordmasters.

Swordmasters trained in the method of contention are superior to all others. Such challenges temper the skills of an apprentice in a way nothing else can.

—Elvorka of Jerris

Regardless of specific training styles, the apprentice learns much of philosophy, style and etiquette during the course of training—even while slaving away at the exacting dances, thrusts, and parries that are the more blatant tools of the Discipline. Apprentices must learn to wield each of the three blades ("eyes to pierce, tongue to lash and sword to slash") with equal facility. Such skills are practiced everywhere once the recruit begins his apprenticeship, but it is at the tournaments and contests that Swordmasters can truly stretch their budding skills and hone those they have begun to master.

Of Tournaments and Tales

On hills and in dales, along riverbanks and in town commons, Swordmasters regularly hold loosely organized tournaments. (A tournament must have at least nine competitors to qualify as a tournament, and not merely a challenge.) At least a dozen specific tournaments take place each year in Barsaive, the largest and most famous being the Grand Tourney, held at midsummer just outside of Bartertown. Swordmasters from across the continent travel to Bartertown each summer to compete in the various contests held at this most prestigious event.

Tournaments offer Swordmasters a number of different opportunities. Perhaps most importantly, tournaments provide a place where adepts can meet with others who share our unique view of the world. The vast majority of Swordmasters are garrulous, social beings who adore being the center of attention. One must rarely wait more than an hour into a tournament before witnessing the first extravagant stories and daring leaps from balconies. Tournaments are often spectacular fun for other Namegivers observing the competition, but be warned! It is all too easy to be caught up in any one of a number of unofficial contests of all types which we Swordmasters use to continually test ourselves and each other.

Official events at tournaments usually include a few swordless competitions testing agility (long and high jumps) and wit (challenges of repartee), but most events revolve around sword fights that test all the Swordmasters' skills. These events fulfill the second major purpose of tournaments by enabling Swordmasters to rise through the Circles of the Discipline. Save for those lucky enough to find a ghost master, almost all Swordmaster adepts rise in Circles in this manner.

Rising through the lower ranks of Circles merely requires that the adept display proficiency in the proper skills over the course of the tournament. Reaching the upper Circles requires the adept to overcome far greater difficulties. In these cases, the Swordmaster must prove himself capable of defeating multiple opponents of his current Circle in dramatic combat. Often, the adept begins the contest at some sort of a disadvantage (for example, having one hand tied behind his back) or with an additional task (rescuing a "captive") he must accomplish during the fight. When attempting to attain the very highest Circles, the odds against a single candidate can be truly overwhelming. I had the great good fortune to witness the troll Swordmaster, Aldaric the Unbowed, successfully defeat eighty opponents in the course of a single battle to reach the Ninth Circle. And Aldaric began the competition at the bottom of a well!

Unfortunately for our Discipline, favoritism sometimes creeps into tournaments to give unfair advantage to Swordmasters attempting to reach the higher Circles. Ideally, a Swordmaster of Fifth Circle or higher should be truly brilliant with his weapon, regardless of the other skills he possesses. Still, the more influential masters who decide close matches occasionally allow less physically adept, but more popular, swordsmen to advance to higher Circles without obtaining the proper level of skill. Ah, well, I suppose it is not surprising that such favoritism occurs in a Discipline so full of vainglorious sods as ours.

Bragging Rights

Each tournament has its own peculiar traditions and customs. However, I have never heard of a tournament that does not bestow bragging rights on one of its contestants. Quite simply, whomever the tournament judges deem to have performed the single most memorable accomplishment at the tournament that year wins the tournament's bragging rights. The action need not occur during the course of an official contest, though it most often does. For example, the right witticism delivered with impeccable timing at the inn has been known to win bragging rights for the swordsman who spoke it. A Swordmaster with bragging rights gains a certain amount of esteem from any adepts who participated in the tournament. Additionally, etiquette demands that an adept who holds bragging rights be allowed first stab at a quest or task or in the event that a dispute occurs between two adepts. Bragging rights last until the next time that tournament is held. Of course, the larger and more prestigious the tournament, the greater the honor of possessing its bragging rights. (I might humbly remind the reader that the Grand Tourney is the most prestigious!)

On Specialists

Certain Swordmasters emphasize one or two aspects of the Discipline over all others. These adepts are known as specialists. Though a number of different Swordmaster specialists roam the length of Barsaive, the two most common are undoubtedly the gallant and the bladesman.

On the Gallant

Swordmasters who use our Discipline's particular talents to build romantic, dashing reputations are called gallants. They focus their energies almost exclusively on aiding members of the opposite sex. Such aid might take the form of a quest or defense of another's honor, but some gallants seem even more interested in being

admired than admiring. These particular adepts tend toward handsomeness of form and feature, but a surprising number are actually quite plain. In fact, their tremendous charisma serves these adepts far better than their physical appearances.

Even in the thick of the deadliest of battles, the gallant Swordmaster remains acutely aware of his image. When it comes to wit, most gallants excel at flirtatious or amorous banter. I knew one such adept who flattered and cajoled his way straight into the Theran headquarters in Vivane to challenge the current military leader to a duel. In fact, no fewer than eight Theran and several Throalic women are said to have fainted away when the handsome elven gallant, Named Julian, received a scratch on his shoulder.

Bladesmen may achieve admirable prowess with their blades, but they lack the sense of drama, joy, and life a gallant possesses, therefore, they cannot contribute as much to their fellow citizens and will always be inferior to gallants.

—Devereaux of Throal

On the Bladesman

The bladesman specialist is less concerned with words and wit than most Swordmasters. Indeed, some bladesmen can actually be characterized as rather quiet, both in battle and in repose. Bladesmen Swordmasters communicate their intentions with their swords, and the results can be truly breathtaking—even to other Swordmasters. Hour after hour, day after day, the bladesman practices a dizzying array of acrobatic and swashbuckling skills. These Swordmasters are true masters of the dance and devote themselves utterly to it, often at the expense of their relationships with others of their Discipline. Undoubtedly, this explains the difficulties bladesmen sometimes encounter when attempting to rise to higher Circles. They simply lack the usual political contacts, thus they receive no favors. As a result, most bladesmen Swordmasters must rely exclusively on their fighting skills to reach the higher Circles of the Discipline.

Such chauvinism is typical of that wordy breed known as the gallant swordsman. As all Namegivers rightly know, actions speak louder than words. The most precious, gilded phrases will always pale next to the glorious exploits of a bladesman Swordmaster. For this reason, he will always be more important than his verbose cousin, the gallant Swordmaster.

—B'nar of Bellan

Weapon Masters

While their Discipline is called the Swordmaster, adepts following it are not limited to the sword. The sword is simply the most common weapon among followers of the Discipline, as it is perceived as an object that has no roots in and use for anything but combat—an axe goes back to a tool for cutting trees, a hammer to an instrument of demolition, and a flail to a farmer's tool; but the sword is an item to be produced and mastered for its own sake. While scholars and even Weaponsmiths may discount this point of view, they will not change a Swordmaster's mind about it.

The Swordmaster's path is not about mastering "the original weapon," though. It is about mastering one's chosen weapon, the weapon fitting one's style and pace, the weapon through which one can express the magic of the Swordmaster. Prospective Swordmasters often find themselves unable to pick up the Discipline if they have not found that weapon. Sometimes, a Swordmaster may even discover that his current weapon, while having him brought through several Circles, is not sufficient to teach him more—this sometimes requires a change in weapon, often one that narrows the weapon choice, from a broadsword to a short-sword, or from a broadsword to a t'skrang-style broadsword, for example. Because the chosen weapon is so important to a Swordmaster, users of a particular weapon are often known by that weapon's name rather than by the generic term Swordmaster. They may be Axemasters, Staffmasters, Flailmasters, Knifemasters, or Clubmasters. Swordmasters having chosen a particular non-sword weapon may use such a Name to identify themselves more clearly towards fellow Swordmasters or others who know of these

Game Information

Bragging Rights Bonuses

A Swordmaster who wins bragging rights for a particular tournament may add +1 to his Social Defense when dealing with anyone who attended that tournament. This bonus remains in effect for as long as the Swordmaster maintains his bragging rights, up to a limit of a year and a day.

Bragging rights also give a Swordmaster the right to accept or turn down quests or heroic deeds before the opportunity is offered to any other Swordmasters at that tournament.

CHOSEN WEAPON

Optional Rule: Some players and gamemasters may want to incorporate the aspect of the chosen weapon more deeply into their games. The following optional rule represents a rules interpretation of this aspect of the Swordmaster Discipline that otherwise is left to be resolved via roleplaying.

The player decides on his chosen weapon upon Initiation into the Discipline. He receives a +1 bonus to any Action Test he makes using that type of weapon, but suffers from a Serious Talent Crisis whenever he uses another weapon despite having a choice (because it provides better magical benefits, for example). Changing the chosen weapon should only be possible after a major revelation in an adept's Discipline, and the general type of weapon should hardly ever be allowed to change.

Adepts who choose a two-handed weapon as their chosen weapon may exchange the positions of their Lion Heart and Second Weapon talents (Lion Heart becoming their Fifth Circle Discipline Talent, Second Weapon being available from Journeyman Talent options), but many Swordmasters frown upon the inability to wield two chosen weapons at once if the chosen weapon is a one-handed weapon, recognizing an adept who once was tempted to use a more impressive weapon rather than striving for the perfect technique.

distinctions. Using such a Name does not change the fact these adepts are Swordmasters, receiving the same talents and abilities as other members of the Discipline (except under certain circumstances if the Chosen Weapon optional rule is used).

SOUL SWORDS

A Swordmaster wielding his soul sword—the sword that is the character's perfect complement—may spend an additional Karma Point each round on any Action Test made using that sword.

The gamemaster and player should keep in mind, however, that finding the soul sword and learning its secrets should only take place as part of an epic quest. Very few Swordmasters ever find their soul swords, let alone rewrite legends with them. Those who do are true heroes.

SPECIALISTS

The Swordmaster discipline knows two major specialist variants that modify the parent Discipline, the Bladesman and the Gallant.

Bladesmen focus more of their efforts on mastery of the sword rather than wit. They exchange positions of their Acrobatic Strike and Taunt talents (Acrobatic Strike becoming a First Circle Discipline Talent, Taunt being placed in the Initiate Talent Options). Additionally, they receive Physical Defense bonuses instead of Social Defense bonuses, and vice versa (They receive Physical Defense bonuses at Circles 2, 8, 10, 12, and 14; they receive Social Defense bonuses at Circles 11, 13, and 15).

Gallants retain their Discipline's accomplishment at striking with wit, but emphasize their social abilities even more, particularly when impressing the preferred targets of their romantic desires. They exchange First Impression and Maneuver (First Impression becoming a First Circle Discipline Talent, Maneuver becoming an Initiate Talent Option), exchange Winning Smile and Heartening Laugh (Winning Smile becoming their Second Circle Discipline Talent, Heartening Laugh being available from the Novice Talent options), and exchange positions of Lasting Impression and Disarm (Lasting Impression becoming their Sixth Circle Discipline Talent, Disarm now available as a Journeyman Talent option).

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

In many ways, Swordmasters resemble the glamorous swashbucklers of song and story. Unlike a Warrior, a Swordmaster does not focus on simply defeating the enemy; it is in the act of fighting that he embodies his Discipline. Killing is not the main goal of battle; it is merely one possible outcome. The Swordmaster need not risk his life foolishly, but should attempt to fight his battles with panache. A Swordmaster who deliberately prolongs a battle in order to make it more exciting and beautiful is acting in accordance with his Discipline. Battle is his art, and he practices it with joy.

The typical Swordmaster is comfortable with both his body and his mind, and he almost never sits quietly in the background. Clever catch phrases, witty insults, and humorous asides are as natural to him as the elegant embellishments of his swordplay. Players who wish to play the glib swashbuckler but have difficulty coming up with the proper "zinger" on the spur of the moment can find inspiration from adventure films of the 1940's and 1950's and any serial or pulp movies. Sitting a little straighter and talking a little louder than usual can also help a player get "in character."

DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS

Many Namegivers believe the simplest way to get from point A to point B is a straight line, but the Swordmaster adamantly denies this notion. To the Swordmaster, how an action is accomplished is at least as important as the result of that action. Simplicity and straightforwardness are alien values to this Discipline; flair, elegance, and verve should accompany the Swordmaster's every act.

A Swordmaster turns the essentially negative and destructive action of killing an opponent into something glorious. A Swordmaster who fails to take advantage of a slight opening in a difficult battle, or who easily defeats a foe without the slightest attempt to embellish the fight with words or deeds will likely suffer a talent crisis. A Swordmaster who sneaks up on an unarmed opponent and slits his throat will likely face a truly serious crisis, and will need to perform a Deed of Atonement.

RITUALS OF ADVANCEMENT

Swordmaster rituals almost always involve flashy displays of fighting prowess, usually one adept against multiple opponents. These rituals often take the form of loosely organized tournaments or contests.

Recruitment: Known or legendary Swordmasters find it a mixed blessing that potential recruits seek them out and challenge them. Of these eager fighters, only those who show unusual skill hear the offer of recruitment into the Swordmaster Discipline. Because even the most brilliant candidate quickly finds a sword at his throat when challenging an adept, reaching First Circle can require months of continuous practice.

Novice (2–4): Swordmasters hold frequent tournaments among themselves. All those who demonstrate mastery of talents of the

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Critical Hit, Life Check, Mind Blade, Pin, Shield Beater, Shield Charge, Spirit Strike, Whirlwind

Ninth Circle

Weapon Bond: The adept may perform a day-long ritual that binds a weapon to him. The ritual causes 2 Blood Magic Damage until the bond is resolved by repeating the ritual. Disarm Tests and other tests made to separate the weapon from the adept add +4 to their Difficulty Number. In addition, as a Standard Action the adept may take 2 Strain and make a Weapon Weaving (6) Test to call the weapon to his hand from within 30 yards. The Difficulty Number for this Test may be modified by the current wielder's strength or any obstacles in the way. Only one weapon may be bonded at a time, but the adept may perform a day-long ritual to break the bond even if the weapon has been lost.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Impressive Strike

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Champion Challenge

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Spot Armor Flaw

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Defense

Master

Talent Options: Infuse Blade, Lion Spirit, Mind Armor, Missile Twister, Rushing Attack, Second Chance

Thirteenth Circle

Keen Blade: Performing a ritual causing 2 Blood Magic Damage, the adept adds +3 steps to the Damage step of one of his melee weapons. In the event of the weapon being lost or destroyed, the adept can heal the Blood Magic Damage lost to that weapon after a year and a day has passed since it left his possession. The adept may apply the Keen Blade ability to additional melee weapons by repeating the ritual and taking another 2 Blood Magic Damage.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Vital Strike

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Multi-Strike

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and +1 to his Spell Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Ethereal Weapon

required Circle during the tournament receive official recognition of their advancement at tournament's end, whether or not they won their battles.

Journeyman (5–8): Adepts advancing through these Circles must also participate in a tournament, but now the adept aspiring to a new Circle must defeat several worthy opponents of his current Circle. The ritual for advancement through these Circles can depend as much on politics as on skill, and this occasionally produces a high-Circle adept who lacks the skill to perform the talents and abilities available to him.

Warden (9–12): The adept stages an exhibition of skill against an almost-overwhelming number of opponents of equal or lesser skill for other, respected Swordmasters.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Swordmaster draws a large circle on the ground around himself, then fences with an imaginary opponent. After an hour the mental image materializes as the desired ghost master, who neatly disarms the Swordmaster. The ritual continues as normal.

Discipline Combinations

Swordmasters interested in following a second Discipline most often choose the path of the Troubadour or Illusionist. Both of these Disciplines lend themselves to flamboyance and require some degree of public performance. Those who take up the Troubadour Discipline often specialize in dramatic recreations of important battles, including their own, while Illusionists often specialize in illusions that highlight or enhance their own physical abilities and appearance in battle.

Swordmasters tend to avoid the Scout and Thief Disciplines, as their preference for stealth and subtlety often clashes with the typical Swordmaster's desire for attention and acclaim. The Beastmaster Discipline is another rare secondary choice, since animals are seldom impressed by witty banter and flashy displays of skill.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE GIFT OF THEFT

The following document is a distillation of several interviews held with Kosooti, noted windling Thief. As windlings are unwilling to commit any important thoughts to paper—a most misguided belief, I must say—the interviews were conducted by Obon Awles, an apprentice librarian under my tutelage here at the Hall of Records. Our scribe has endeavored to preserve the distinctive stylings of Kosooti's speech. Incidentally, if any readers happen to have a means of contacting Kosooti, Obon would like it known that he greatly desires the return of a certain medallion, a family heirloom of great sentimental value.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

To steal! This is the greatest thrill in all of existence! To take something that is not meant to be taken, to laugh in the face of foolish rules and laws!—all else pales in comparison. Do not let silly sayings about the virtue of hard work and honesty confuse you. Pilfered fruit tastes the sweetest, and the gem stolen from the turban of an enraged troll merchant shines brighter than one gained through toil and sweat!

The way of the Thief is the original way of the adept. All Disciplines have stolen their ways from the way of the Thief. For is not the way of the adept the way of magically taking from the world abilities that would otherwise be learned only through years of perspiration and effort? We merely pluck these talents from the air, with the swiftness and ease of a stealthy child plucking peaches from the trees of a neighboring village. All of us who tread the Adept's Way are Thieves.

Though some of the others would hotly deny this, they have lost touch with their origins and think they are better than we. Let them believe what they will. Their self-delusion is one property I have no interest in taking from them. But listen up, scribe, and I will give you a gift; the gift of insight.

You look at me with suspicion, stuffy dwarfling. I pick your thoughts as I might pick your pocket. You believe that Thieves do not give, they only take. What you do not understand is that the act of taking is the greatest gift of all. Allow me to explain.

ON THE TYRANNY OF POSSESSION

Look at you, stuffy dwarfling. You sit before me, decked out in what passes for gaudy finery among your dowdy kind—a colorful hat, with dyed peacock feather; a modest yet no doubt expensive tunic of velvet, one that cries out "Quality"; fine leggings, exquisite leather boots; a medallion of rubies and gold that would choke a dragon. Even the pen you write with is of the finest ivory, intricately carved by a master artisan of my people.

Well, mark my words, stuffy one: your finery is not armor—it is a cage. Your possessions trap you, weigh you down, stunt the growth of your soul. You have become your possessions, for every one of your hopes has become wrapped up in what you own.

No! Do not attempt to deny it. There is no shame in this attitude—well, perhaps there is, but it is a shame shared by many denizens of Barsaive. Many Namegivers must claim this common failing; they believe that they are what they own. Goods and possessions are thought to attract lovers, win friends, and prove one's value in the world. What lamentable folly! It is your thoughts, your actions, your dreams, your memories that define you and create true worth.

So when the Thief steals your money, she takes not only your possessions or your coin. She takes your delusion and so gives you truth. Those who do not understand this gift brand us as scoundrels, it is true. Why, some poor benighted souls actually believe that stealing is evil! We who follow the Discipline of the Thief simply shrug at such quaint notions, for a true Thief does not expect gratitude for her gifts. She gives for the joy of it.

FORGING ALLIANCES

Because we are misunderstood by so many, false beliefs about Thieves abound in Barsaive. But perhaps the most absurd untruth contends that Thieves lead sad and lonely lives, deprived by their Discipline of the companionship of others. What foolishness! Why, I could stack my friends and allies up against those of any other Namegiver and not come up wanting, I assure you. Yes, it is true that those Thieves who follow the path of selfishness—of which I shall speak more—shield themselves from the love of others and draw strength from their solitude. But many more of us are as gregarious as a whushah fly in blooming season—and most delightful company, as you surely must agree! We are fully capable of sustaining profitable alliances with others, of keeping our word, and of tying our vital threads to Namegivers we love and esteem. I myself have ritually bound myself to the destiny of an adventuring band known as The Seven Equals. Our number contains exemplars of many different races and Disciplines, and they all trust me with their lives, as I trust them with mine.

Just because a Thief lives to steal, does not mean she must steal from everyone. Myself, I prefer to steal from the too-haughty

Therans, from drooling Horrors and their corrupt servants, and from the long dead, who shall scarcely miss their coins and jewels. And, of course, from those in great spiritual need of the gift of theft.

Still, many wrong-thinking Namegivers continue to believe that we Thieves have less self-control than others who walk magical pathways. But I can as easily resist the urge to steal the hard-won silver of my comrades as can a Warrior resist the urge to stab his brother, or a Wizard refrain from casting a mind-ripping hex on his mother. Like other adepts, we choose our targets with care. It would be stupid to betray my fellows through petty theft: together we have done many great deeds, and built a legend greater than any of us could have done alone. Thieves are not stupid. Not the live ones, anyway.

It is true that some adventuring bands are reluctant to recruit Thieves as companions. This is their great loss. For the way of the Thief provides many abilities beyond the mere lifting of purses and pilfering of coppers, abilities that have proved vital to many a legendary endeavor. Think on it. What good is finding a chest inside a deep and musty kaer if there is no one to seduce its lock, to steal into the heart of the mechanism and coax it open? And what adventuring band has never needed someone to stalk soundlessly into an enemy camp for an unnoted reconnoiter? What crime is it to steal from a hidden, ancient blade the secret of its location and spare one's comrades from its thirst for blood? And how often do activities of adventurers lead them into intrigue and the machinations of the powerful? In such situations, can one begrudge the Thief her ability to don the garb of others and rob the foe of treasured confidences? And the usefulness of an unexpected dagger thrust between the shoulder blades of a vengeful Nethermancer should be beyond question to any thinking adventurer. Yes, the Thief is to be coveted as an ally: better to draw us to your bosom than cast us out. Unless, course, you wish us to feel justified in liberating your goods from you.

Likewise, the wise Thief values the abilities of trusted associates more than any purloined bauble. I can swing a scabbard with more than passable facility, but prefer to leave such matters up to the true experts, Warriors and Swordmasters. Likewise, I am glad to have spellcasters to rely upon when magical obstacles obscure my path. This is mere common sense, which all assume any adventurer—save the Thief—possesses as a matter of course. Mere prejudice prevents every Namegiver from seeing that the Thief's sense of reason is no more clouded than that of any other adept.

And so, despite the fact that our actions alone keep this world from sinking into a mire of greed, where only the rich have money and the poor have nothing, Namegivers in many quarters think ill of us. This is inconvenient at times, but it also becomes part of the challenge. And thievery would contain no thrill were it an easy pursuit.

Thrill or no thrill, the suspicion with which others Namegivers greet us can be very saddening at times. Still, their reaction seems natural considering the secrecy and caution we must observe—and so I cannot really fault them for it.

—Klerkonius of Urupa

FINDING A MASTER

How does the young Namegiver who wishes to pursue the path of the Thief find a mentor? Unlike a Weaponsmith or Troubadour, a Thief is not wise to announce her Discipline to all who approach, for outside of Kratas few villages welcome Thieves. And so finding a mentor becomes the first test of the would-be Thief. He must be perceptive enough to spot a true Thief when she passes through his field of vision. He must be stealthy enough to approach her and charming enough to "steal her heart," to convince her that he deserves the ultimate gift. He must show that he is free of greed, that the larceny in his heart is as pure as a Throalic silver ingot.

When a Thief tutors a student, she does not simply reveal the truth. She forces the student to "steal" it from her. She speaks in riddles, offers puzzles, deliberately misleads. Only the novice clever enough to see through the deceptions and discern the secrets of Thiefly talents wins initiation. But the Discipline of the Thief is not a mere intellectual matter, a series of puzzles to be solved in the comfort of one's kitchen. Thievery is a practical craft, one best practiced in the field. And the true initiation of a Thief takes place in the course of a crime: the master sends the student to steal something from a target greatly in need of the gift of theft. If the student is truly Thief material, the vaunted talents of our way manifest themselves as the need for them arises. If the student is not—well, capture is one of the hazards that failed Thieves face.

Many initiates in other Disciplines would quail at the thought of a master who is not reliable. But our masters deceive us so that we may learn to see what is hidden and to reveal to us a higher truth: that we can rely upon no others save ourselves in this world. Our magic does not work without a daring heart and a solitary mind. Picking a pocket is not a team effort, for one cat walks more quietly than many. Though alliances with others are not forbidden to our Discipline, ultimately the Thief is alone, an outsider. There are those, lamentably, who take this concept too far, as I shall explain in a moment. But all Thieves must take this idea to their bosoms in one way or another.

On Stealing Magic From the World

When the student Thief finds the pathway of the Thief, she is stealing the directions to its entrance from her master. Likewise, when she learns a new talent or ascends to a higher Circle, she steals magic from the world. Magic is everywhere around us, but many are blind to it. They cannot see that it is there for the taking. Others see the magic, but lack the boldness to reach out and grab it for themselves. And the act requires boldness, as well as a keen mind. For like any hoarder of goods, the world holds tightly to its magic. The Thief must seduce, trick, and swindle the world into surrendering its glories.

When a Thief wishes to advance to a higher Circle, she must first find another Thief of a higher Circle than herself. This second Thief serves as the tester and sets a task to test the Thief's readiness for advancement. My last advancement was quite an ordeal, yes indeed. My difficulties began as I sought a Thief of greater capability than my own, for few exist. Then I had to persuade that Thief, one Ventioner, not to split me in two with an axe. (This desire of hers stemmed from a minor misunderstanding involving her young husband, a scarf of silk, and a pair of piglets—I won't go into the details here.) At any rate, she assigned me to steal the left upper canine tooth of a Horror known only as the Pulse. This scar that runs down my side, from my neck to below my knee, is the result of that assignment. I understand that a number of Horror-marked Cavalrymen seek the tooth even as we speak. But that is none of my affair, for tradition demands that the material fruit of the Circle advancement ritual goes to the master who created the assignment. Therefore, the Pulse must deal with Ventioner if it wants its rotting tooth back.

When an adept learns a new talent, the magic of the world becomes the wronged party. One talent of the Thief's way enables us to spot traps. When I wished to learn this talent, I sought out a master familiar with its secret. He told me many contradictory things about the practice of the talent, leaving me to puzzle through the thicket of his words. Then he sent me to the old Festival of Wonders tower outside Bartertown, a structure known for the fiendish traps hidden throughout it. I penetrated the tower and, concentrating on the riddles the master had told me, soon found my mind flooded with new understanding. I stood before a section of wall and suddenly knew it to be a trap. I sent magic swirling through my pattern and snatched that moment in time, permanently stealing it. Now whenever I am near a trap, that magic I have stolen from the world does my bidding and warns me of the danger that I face. Many times before and since I have stolen such insights from the world and added them to my pattern.

On Other Thieves

The path of the Thief I have laid out for you is not the only one. True, most Thieves seek out material treasures—gems, gold coins, rare finery and such. But other types of Thieves seek other booty. The Thief of knowledge, also known as the spy, believes that information is worth more than gold. Curiosity, and the need to throw light on secrets and spread the truth of a situation throughout the world—or at least to well-heeled clients—drives the Thief of knowledge.

The Thief of love, the romancer, uses her talents of disguise and deception to seduce her targets. Instead of a trail of empty vaults, she leaves behind a legion of broken hearts.

Though the spy and the romancer set their sights on different prizes, both bestow the gift of theft on other Namegivers. The spy steals secrets, thereby freeing her target from the suspicions and fears that secrets breed. The romancer, meanwhile, steals sentiment rather than love, giving her victim new, clearer insight into his or her own heart and the hearts of others, and teaches the recipient of her gift to protect that most precious possession of all—love.

—Valencias of Iopos

On the Way of Selfishness

Still other Thieves follow a dark path, the path of selfishness. They have forgotten the legacy of the first heroes and the true heritage of our path. These Thieves connect their patterns to the tradition of thievery by devoting themselves to pure selfishness. They believe that a Thief can only prosper through suspicion of others and that cooperation and compassion weakens their talents and renders them vulnerable. To me, stealing something the owner values too much is an act of charity, a service not only to its possessor but to the community. But to Thieves who walk the path of selfishness, any care at all for the fate of the victim is a destructive distraction. They can maintain no allies and pledge to truly love none but themselves. Needless to say, Thieves traveling this path are quick to betray one another.

I have met numerous Thieves set upon the path of selfishness in my travels, and though I have no way of knowing for certain, I fear their ranks increase each season. I have attempted to understand these Thieves who shun society, but it is a thankless task. They are reticent in the extreme, unwilling to speak at any length about themselves or their journey in the Discipline. But I spent many coins plying these types with strong drink and eventually gleaned from them their stories.

The things I heard made my hair stand on end! Their masters taught them not through riddles, but through pain! Their initiations were literally by fire, as their masters thrust their arms and legs into open flames. By this, their masters intended to teach them not to trust anyone. Myself, I would have taken this as a lesson in

the importance of carefully choosing one's master. A revealing lie is much more appropriate than—but you know my prejudices already, do you not, stuffy dwarf?

I believe that the Thief who walks the selfishness way robs herself most of all. For she can never feel camaraderie with others. She can never relax; she must always fear a knock at the door or a knife in the back. She can never join with others for mutual benefit. I, who walk the way of the gift of theft, form alliances easily. I have been a valued member of many an adventuring troupe in my day. And though I stole a few baubles from them from time to time, these thefts were mere pranks. I would never dream of taking anything truly worthwhile from a companion, such as a magical treasure to which a friend had woven a thread. But the Thief of the selfishness way would do so without hesitation—would fear losing her edge, in fact, if she failed to betray her supposed friends.

The selfishness Thief also feels no need to return her winnings to the world. She loves her loot as fervently as any merchant and keeps it close to her chest. When she loses her treasure or has it stolen from her—and I must confess a particular joy in stealing from my misguided brethren—she mourns for it as anyone else would mourn for a slain comrade. Without true friends, the selfishness Thief pours her love into gold and gemstones. Though booty cannot keep one warm at night or rescue one in times of trouble, these Thieves still prefer booty to the friendship of others—for being a true friend means admitting you need others. And that is the last thing a selfishness Thief can afford to do.

In my opinion, the Thief on the path of selfishness lives a poor life, but these Thieves with tangled hearts continue to spread their rough and unforgiving vision throughout Barsaive, burning it into the flesh of their initiates. If I could steal from them their confusion, their selfish ways, I would do so. That would truly be a gift, to them and to our land.

The true Thief has no space in his heart for compassion, sentiment, or beautiful-sounding ideals. Such things only blind the mind's eye and slow the hand. This may sound "rough and unforgiving," but such is our world.

—Blagstern of Kratas

GAME INFORMATION

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

The Thief see the world as a ripe target for robbery, but different types of Thieves see their stealing in different lights. Many see their Discipline as heroic. They remember that the first heroes of the Namegiver races were Thieves who taught the Passions a lesson in compassion. Thieves who see their Discipline this way are followers of the trickster's path. Trickster Thieves can work easily in groups such as the typical party of player characters. Like all Thieves, they rely on their own abilities before depending on other people, but they do not feel that self-reliance precludes cooperation with others.

Trickster Thief characters probably had reputations as rebels, pranksters, or charming ne'er-do-wells even in childhood. Though the average trickster Thief has gotten into trouble constantly from a very early age, he causes the kind of spectacular but largely harmless trouble that others find forgivable. A trickster Thief is usually a charming rogue, envied for his ability to flout the rules most citizens dare not break. Though trickster Thieves are as stealthy as any other Thief when necessary, they enjoy drawing attention to themselves when not at work.

The solitary Thief, on the other hand, cares little for mythology or metaphor. He tends to see the world in personal terms—both his mark and his enemy. In order to prosper, the solitary Thief rejects even the appearance of dependence on others and draws strength and solace from himself alone. This attitude makes it difficult for a solitary Thief to fit in with the average adventuring band. Solitary Thieves generally want loot, and lots of it. They often judge their own value by the amount of money they've stolen; unlike tricksters, solitary Thieves usually hold tight to their ill-gotten gains.

Most solitary Thieves had troubled childhoods, and may have been shunned from a young age. They probably courted grave trouble as youngsters by getting into serious fights and committing vandalism and serious thefts. Often sullen, distant and disaffected, many a solitary Thief has burned his bridges back home and is no longer welcome in the community that raised him. He presents a truculent and threatening face to the world, often using body language alone to warn other people off. Others fade into a crowd, appearing nondescript to evade notice.

DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS

A trickster Thief is traditionally taught that the act of stealing matters more than the stolen item, and may face a talent crisis when seized by greed or the desire to hoard ill-gotten gains. He may also face a talent crisis if he obeys a stupid law, turns down the opportunity to perform a spectacular heist, or remains silent when given an opportunity to brag about past deeds.

In contrast, a selfish Thief may violate his Discipline by performing a compassionate act, becoming dependent on another person, or doubting his own ability. The selfish Thief also tends to place more importance on the prizes from his heists, and may suffer a talent crisis if those items are lost or stolen. Recovering those lost or stolen items may form a perverse Deed of Atonement.

Rituals of Advancement

Thieves do not observe formal advancement rituals. Often, a Thief will make it known that he is planning a theft that will demonstrate his skill. Success at the crime serves as proof of his advancement. In other cases, an "elder" Thief will challenge his trainee to steal something based on his level of experience. A Novice thief may be tasked with stealing a silver spoon from a city councilor's home, while one seeking Warden status may need to steal an earring from a high-Circle Nethermancer—while the magician is still wearing it.

Recruitment: Recruitment for Thieves is a haphazard, nebulous procedure. If a Thief notices a potential student, he often sets some sort of challenge to test the recruit's potential. Some ordinary Namegivers who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances undergo "spontaneous initiation" into the Discipline.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Thief must steal the orichalcum coin required for the ritual, then infiltrate a forbidden area in which to perform the ritual.

Discipline Combinations

The additional Disciplines attractive to Thieves depend on the type of Thief in question. Trickster Thieves tend to be drawn to the Illusionist, Swordmaster and Troubadour Disciplines because all three offer skills Thieves find useful and emphasize either illusion or performance.

Thieves consider Illusionists to be the ultimate tricksters by altering the appearance of reality; their spells can add a touch of the outrageous to any high-profile heist. The Swordmaster's talents give the Thief impressive combat ability with a flamboyance the trickster finds extremely attractive. The Troubadour Discipline offers social skills useful for running cons and swindles, and also allows the trickster to spread his own legend in a memorable way.

Solitary Thieves most often take up the Archer, Nethermancer or Warrior Disciplines as a second adept's way. The way of the Warrior appeals to these Thieves as the simplest way to beef up their fighting prowess. The Archer Discipline also gives them fighting ability, though solitary Thieves who become Archers often turn to the sniper's path (see the **On the Path of the Archer** chapter, p.20). Seeing the world as their enemy, they give in to the lure of the sniper's arrow and become the brigands and roadway ambushers who pick off targets from a distance and then loot the corpses. The solitary Thief often feels a strong kinship with the Nethermancer's way because practitioners of both Disciplines are seen by others (and often themselves) as dark and dangerous outcasts. Also, Nethermancers break the taboos surrounding death and the Horrors just as Thieves break more ordinary laws.

Thieves of any type rarely become Beastmasters or Cavalrymen because both of those Disciplines require a dedication to and an understanding of another being that Thieves find hard to achieve.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Bank Shot, Escape Divination, Poison Resistance, Quick Shot, Second Weapon, Sense Danger, Shackle Shrug, Tiger Spring

Ninth Circle

Shadowcloak: For 2 Strain, the adept becomes virtually invisible in shadows or darkness. The adept adds +4 to the Detection Difficulty of any sight-based Perception Tests made to notice him.
If he uses the Silent Walk talent while under the effect of this ability, the talent's Detection Difficulty also applies to any sight-based Perception Tests made to detect him. Though the adept can still be seen normally in light, the presence of light does not end the effect; he can become virtually invisible by simply stepping back into a shadow. The effect lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Gold Sense

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Lip Reading

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Astral Pocket

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Chameleon

Master

Talent Options: Critical Hit, Detect Falsehood, Mind Wave, Safe Thought, Second Chance, Sense Magic Item

Thirteenth Circle

Shadow Heal: The adept must be using Shadowcloak to conceal himself in shadow to use Shadow Heal. The Shadow Heal ability allows the adept to spend as many Karma Points as he wishes on the next Recovery Test, if it is made while still concealed in the Shadowcloak. He must choose how many Karma Points he will spend before making the Recovery Test. Damage is healed by the results of the Recovery Test as normal. The shadows that make up his cloak are used to heal the adept; the effect of the Shadowcloak ability ends after he makes his Recovery Test.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Gain Surprise

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +2 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Impossible Hide

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Aura Armor

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

WHY THE TROUBADOUR SINGS

This manuscript was written by one Vaerin Morningstar, an elven Troubadour who hails from Jerris. How it found a home in our library remains a puzzle to me, but that small concern is not sufficient to prevent me from including the essay in this book, as it captures the essence of the Troubadour Discipline in a way few other works do.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

OF OUR PLACE IN THE WORLD

Storytellers, singers, joyfellows, entertainers, dispellers of gloom, dispensers of glee, members of the "liar's trade," quick with a quip and yarn; song-spinners, always distracted from the serious aspects of life by an unfinished rhyme or a recalcitrant melody—this is how many view our Discipline. How little they know! But listen to my tale, that you might see the truth.

A Troubadour was singing in the common room of an inn when a dusty Warrior entered. Exhausted from an adventure, the Warrior held his peace while he quaffed an ale or five, listening to the light and joyful ditties of the Troubadour. Finally, emboldened by drink, he strode up to the storyteller and laughed in her face.

"You think yourself so grand and important, don't you, my pretty?" he slurred. "You put on such airs. Yet what do you do that has import in the grand scheme of things? You sing."

The Troubadour set aside her lute, and nodded agreement.

"Yes, my large-thewed friend, that I do. I sing. And you?"

The Warrior puffed out his chest. "I fight for a cause I believe in," he boasted. "I fight for the greater glory of Barsaive. I fight to rebuild her to her past glory, to eradicate the stain of the Scourge. And what do you do? You sing."

"That I do," the Troubadour agreed, her smile unfaded. "And you—you have sworn to clear the whole of Barsaive of the Scourge's taint single-handedly? A mighty task you've set yourself."

"Not single-handedly," the Warrior corrected scornfully. "I am a hero. I will inspire others to follow in my footsteps, and the Passions will render the actions of those who follow me to my account as well. And what do you do? You sing. How can there be anything of less account than that?"

"Let me weave you a tale," the Troubadour said, her smile still unfaded. She picked up her lute and began to sing. And such a tale she told, of bravery and valor and sacrifice and honor. And it was only as she drew to a close that the Warrior realized she told his tale.

And then the Troubadour cocked her head to one side, and her smile faded. And she said to the Warrior, "On reflection, I see you are right. My words are of no account."

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF TALES

Do you take my meaning, my friends? We of the word and the melody are an integral part of the rebuilding of Barsaive—and, for that matter, a part of anything that is considered noteworthy in our world. The Warrior in my little tale was right to some degree, of course. The value of a hero is not measured solely by his own feats and achievements. Important though they may be, they are perforce limited, for even the greatest hero can be in only one place at a time. So how else do we mark the measure of a hero? By his effect on others—on those who follow him and strive to mimic the ideal he represents. Some of those who follow in the hero's footsteps may become heroes in their own right, and others will follow them in turn. And so the effects of the hero's deeds spread, like the branching boughs of a great tree. And from the seed of the hero's deeds, an entire forest may spring.

And where is our place in this, we of the word and the melody? Why, we are the means by which a hero's name becomes known throughout the world. Our songs and our tales expand a hero's fame. We nurture and spread his legend, just as the wind carries the seeds of the thundra flower.

A hero on his own may perform great deeds. But unless his legend is told and retold, those deeds will die with him. If Troubadours tell and retell that legend, those deeds will live forever. Is that of no account? I leave it for you to decide.

ON ENTERTAINMENT

There are two facets to the Discipline of the Troubadour—apparently distinct, yet interconnected. The first facet is the face we most often show to the world—the face of the entertainer. In this guise, we offer diversion. We help people forget their troubles and bring joy, relief and release. Living in our world is hard, both on the body and on the soul. And just as the body needs rest after a day of work, so does the soul need relief.

That relief can be found in a light tale, a bawdy song, a ditty of nonsense words that brings a smile and a laugh to those who hear it. Many ordinary folk consider this relief the greatest gift that those of my Discipline can bestow. My fellow Troubadours

and I know differently, for entertainment is more than laughter. Relief and release for the soul can be found in emotions other than joy and lightheartedness. That is why we of the word and the melody recall dark tales as well, tales that evoke sadness, fear, anger. These other emotions we deliver, as we deliver joy. There is heart-ease in laughter, but also in tears. And heart-ease is the goal of entertainment, whether that entertainment be tragedy or comedy.

I have heard it argued that, when the world turns dark and doom stalks our footsteps, entertainment is valueless, frivolous. Only those actions that contribute directly to survival are important. But can anyone argue thus who has actually faced disaster? In such situations, despair is the greatest enemy of all—and the enemy that the Troubadour fights the hardest. We provide hope, we of the word and the melody. Or, more correctly, with our tales and songs we remind those around us of the value of hope. We inspire them with tales of past victories. We give them courage with tales of people who, beset by gloom, remained defiant and undismayed. We sing of sun on the grass, the laughter of children, the whispering of the winds through the forests, the dance of a stream that flows down from the mountains, the touch of parent or child or lover. Why? To remind people that life is worth living, a truth that is easily forgotten under the shadow of danger.

This facet of our art underwent its greatest trial during the Scourge, before the kaers were opened once more to the sun and the sky. How easy it would have been for the Namegiver races to have abandoned hope! Whole generations were born within the wombs of stone, knowing they would live and die without walking free under the endless sky. Whole generations knew that they, and their children, and even their children's children, would be confined—imprisoned!—within cells of rock.

With our songs and tales and quips and jests, we kept alive the knowledge that an entire world existed beyond the walls and wards of the kaer. We kept alive the knowledge that this outside world was good. Children who had never seen a tree—and never would!—still sang old songs like *The Bough and the Leaf*. Through songs and tales, they knew the brilliant green of ironbough leaves, they knew the heart-stopping gold of the flaxflower, they heard in their souls the song of nesting warblers and skywings. They knew they would have only those songs and tales, and knew the same was true for their children. Yet they knew that someday, children of their blood would walk again beneath the skies and among the trees. And that knowledge filled them with hope and enabled them to endure. Such is the value of entertainment!

But the most important stories and songs enable us to laugh at and speak of those things that would be too painful for us to acknowledge otherwise.

—Vinslo of Araden

This knowledge—that thoughts of better times to come ease days of sorrow—is not the sole province of the Troubadours. How often do we hear ordinary farmers and herdsmen singing songs of Spring and Summer around the fire while the storms of Winter batter at the door?

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Dear Merrox, you miss the true importance of the soul-soothing balm called entertainment. Stories and songs may help us to forget our troubles—and to forget the snow falling.

On the Persistence of Memory

In the second facet of our Discipline, we Troubadours serve as the memory and the conscience of our kaers, towns, villages—our society. We are repositories of wisdom. We recall the twists and turns of the past, from which the course of the future may sometimes be plotted. To a certain degree, Troubadours become the soul of our society, its very identity.

How can I make this claim? Think on it, my friends. Whence does your sense of self spring, your sense of identity? It arises from the pattern of your days, does it not? You remember your thoughts and actions, your hopes and fears of yesterday, and you feel confident that tomorrow you will recall your thoughts and actions of today. If each day were distinct in and of itself, with no connection to the past or the future, if you could not remember your actions of yesterday and knew that tomorrow you would not recall your actions of today—what of your sense of self? Would you have a sense of identity? Would you know who you are? I think not.

And thus with a society. We Troubadours recall the thoughts and actions of yesteryear. We are society's memory, we ensure that

the pattern of its days continues. Let us approach this another way. Adepts of other Disciplines—Weaponsmiths, as an example—conserve the knowledge and skills needed to create weapons by remembering and passing on the traditions and talents of their Discipline. We Troubadours conserve the knowledge of a society's identity. We preserve self-knowledge for a society, as memory does for an individual. We are a society's memory, my fellows and I.

Be aware that this arrangement contains weaknesses as well as strengths, for whoever controls the Troubadours controls the memory of society. Whoever controls the Troubadours controls the truth and holds in his hands the very identity and soul of that society. This is why those of the word and the melody so often seem aloof from the societies we serve. We must remain independent of petty political concerns, just as an individual's conscience must remain untainted by his will and his fears.

Vaerin Morningstar does not stress this point enough. Though the art of letters is more widespread now than it was before the Scourge, many in Throal cannot so much as write their own Names. Yet, thanks to the Troubadours, these illiterates know of their origins and the birth of their land. The importance of this knowledge cannot be overstated. Only our memories of the past will inspire us to remain free of the Theran yoke. And who, were it not for the Troubadours, would be trustees of that knowledge?

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

The Joy of the Troubadour

Heavy is our responsibility, and great our importance in society. Yet do I not think that this weight of import makes our day-to-day life joyless and burdensome. Quite the contrary, my friend! For magic flows through us. It lifts us above the petty concerns of the world and ennobles us.

Consider, if you would, the expression "weaving a tale." This is more than a figure of speech. For a Troubadour feels the magic that surrounds him as threads, as the warp and the weft in woven fabric. Those threads connect her to the people who hear her songs and tales. As we work our art, those threads are woven together into the great tapestry that is society. We feel our part in this great tapestry. We feel our influence spreading out from us, as the threads of our words connect more and more people to each other. When we weave a tale, we are greater than ourselves. We are limited not by our physical dimensions, but only by the bounds of the tapestry itself. How can I convey the wonder to one who has not experienced it?

Perhaps this example will serve. Have you, esteemed reader, ever been in a crowd—a crowd that suddenly became a mob, inflamed with a single intent? Did you not feel that you were part of something larger than yourself, something greater than the sum of the individuals who made up the mob? If so, then you have felt a dark reflection of what a Troubadour experiences when she tells a tale or sings a song. (Intoxicating, was it not? Intoxicating and, to a degree, addictive. A Troubadour often must struggle to maintain her sense of self in the tapestry she weaves.)

Troubadours and the Passions

Troubadours revere two Passions above all: Astendar and Mynbruje. We honor Astendar in her guise as the Passion of Music. We believe that inspiration for new songs and melodies springs from the heart and soul of Astendar. Our ability to create and channel emotions with our music is but a pale reflection of Astendar's powers. As we honor Astendar for her patronage of entertainment, so we revere Mynbruje as patron of Knowledge and Truth. We serve as the repositories of wisdom among the Namegivers, as Mynbruje serves among the Passions.

On Training

Troubadours must master two distinct skills that form the center of our Discipline. In only one of these does magic play a significant role. (I understand that this is true for other Disciplines as well, now that I think on it.) Consider the last time you saw a Troubadour perform, esteemed reader. No doubt she recited tales and performed songs, some of which you remembered as traditional stories of your childhood, and some of which were completely new to you. Even when she was reciting a poem you knew word for word as a child, did she not infuse it with a fresh spirit, with the energy and enthusiasm that mark the work of a good Troubadour? Of course! And when she retold one

of the ancient odes—*Jaron and the Sphinx*, perhaps, or the *Ballad of Nioku*—did she not match word for word every other performance you have heard of the piece, reciting every line of the one hundred score written? Again, of course!

And therein are reflected the two types of skill required of a Troubadour: the talent for performance, and the aptitude for simple learning. Both are essential for a true Troubadour. Anyone with tenacity and keenness of memory could learn *Jaron and the Sphinx*, but if told without the talent for performance, who would listen? Similarly, someone who does not follow the way of the Troubadour could conceivably entertain and amuse with his performance, but without the knowledge of the ancient odes and songs he could never be more than a clever tale-spinner.

Simple learning must be practiced and perfected alone (or, at the very most, in the presence of a single instructor), but performing can only be practiced in the presence of others outside the Discipline (in other words, an audience). My training, by way of example, began with the former. I had the fortune of being able to read and write, so my instructor began my indoctrination by banishing me to a room with a written copy of the ballad called *Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter*. He told me that he would undertake my training as a Troubadour only if I proved my dedication to my supposed calling by memorizing the entire ballad—its entire twenty score and eight lines—word for word. Only when I could recite it to him without a single error would he consider beginning my training.

I did not realize it at the time, but memorizing the ballad constituted the beginning of my training. *Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter* is a staple of the repertoire of any true Troubadour.

In the regions where Vaerin was trained, perhaps. Among more civilized peoples, only the basest of joyfellows would waste time memorizing doggerel like Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter.

—Gelteraine of Throal

Only after I had memorized the ballad to my instructor's satisfaction did he deign to teach me the techniques of performance. For that, of course, we needed an audience, which we found at a nearby wine house. My instructor began the evening by reciting in their entirety *Follow the Plow* and *The Farmer's Wife is Milking*, much to the amusement of the wine-house patrons. He had instructed me to pay close attention to the techniques he used—the vocal stylings, the rhythmic patterns, the emphasis applied to the verse meter. When it came time for me to perform *Bellae*, I was to experiment with those techniques myself, while staying ever mindful of the audience's reaction to my offering. It was then, at that simple wine house, that I first truly felt the magic that is the way of the Troubadour. All my subsequent training has followed the same pattern. When my instructor decided that I was ready to advance to the next Circle of the Discipline, he would send me away with another staple of the Troubadour's art: the *Ballad of Nioku*, perhaps, or the epic *Battle of Sky Point*. Once I had learned the material, he would have me recite it for others under his watchful eye.

Though it is a great advantage, one may lack the ability to read and write and still become a Troubadour. Because the art of the Troubadour is, by and large, an oral tradition, learning material from the written page provides little benefit—other than freeing the instructor for other activities!

—Beldeaux of Ar Kham

On Specialists

I have limited my discourse to what I consider the true art of the Troubadour. But there are some who claim membership in the Discipline who practice what I judge to be a degraded form of the art. Though I consider them less worthy than my true fellows, any discussion of the Discipline would be incomplete without at least a mention of these adepts.

An interestingly self-centered and limiting interpretation. The reader is advised to keep Vaerin's prejudices in mind when reading the following passages. Most people outside the Discipline—and many within it, for that matter—consider sages and map makers "true" Troubadours—and rightly so!

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

To my mind—and those of my instructor and mentors in the art, of course—the Discipline of the Troubadour contains two facets: knowledge and performance. The true art of the Troubadour involves both. How, then, is one to view the sage? Some among those considered wise classify sages as a kind of "specialty" within the Discipline of Troubadour. Granted, a sage has the same factual knowledge as a true Troubadour. A sage knows the correct wording of epics such as the *Battle of Sky Point*, and she understands the historical subtext and poetic allusions it contains. Thus, one could argue that sages serve as repositories of knowledge. Yet to my mind, the fact that they do not perform the odes they know places them outside the definition of the Troubadour. Sages are scholars, after all, and the art of the Troubadour encompasses more than simple scholarship.

Mapmakers represent an even more doubtful case. Again, they are scholars first and foremost, concentrating on the physical landscape as I and my fellows concentrate on the landscape of the mind and the heart. Though the mapmaker exhibits skill beyond simple scholarship, he exercises his practice in solitude in the same way as does the Weaponsmith. This also sets the mapmaker apart from the true Troubadour.

Therein, in essence, lies the distinction between the true Troubadour and the Discipline's lesser reflections. A Troubadour without an audience is not a true Troubadour.

I feel obliged to make reference to the legendary Troubadour Shantaya Nightstar at this point. Shantaya followed the map maker specialty and was an outstanding example of what I would call a true Troubadour. As for her audience, I would argue that all of Barsaive was hers to entertain and inspire.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Game Information

Specialists

Two major specialist variants to the Troubadour Discipline are known in Barsaive, the Sage and the Mapmaker.

The **Sage** is less concerned with entertaining than delivering knowledge and facts, for which he still requires communicational talents, and sometimes the means to convince a source to give up information. He exchanges the positions of his Read/Write Lan-

guage and Mimic Voice talents (Read/Write Language becoming a First Circle Discipline Talent, Mimic Voice being an Initiate Talent Option), he exchanges the positions of his Research and Disguise Self Talents (Research now being the Second Circle Discipline Talent, Disguise Self becoming a Journeyman Talent Option), and he exchanges Book Memory and Empathic Sense (Book Memory becoming his Third Circle Discipline Talent, Empathic Sense becoming available as a Journeyman Talent Option). For his Karma Ritual, he usually chooses to give a lecture or report of facts rather than performing entertainment.

The **Mapmaker** chooses to impart knowledge in a practical manner; where Sages and normal Troubadours offer guidance through theoretical knowledge and inspiration, the Mapmaker desires to guide others through pointing in the right direction, literally. He receives Navigation instead of Mimic Voice (Navigation being introduced to the Discipline as a First Circle Discipline Talent, Mimic Voice not being available to the adept at all), receives Read/Write Language for Impress (Read/Write Language becoming a First Circle Discipline Talent, Impress becoming an Initiate Talent Option), and exchanges positions of his Research and Disguise Self Talents (Research now being the Second Circle Discipline Talent, Disguise Self becoming a Journeyman Talent Option). In addition, the Mapmaker does not gain the Half-magic ability to perform for audiences, but makes Half-magic Tests for Mapmaking Tests (***Player's Guide***, p. 98) and to embellish his maps; his Karma Ritual can be accomplished in solitude and involves drawing a map pertaining to his current location.

Roleplaying Hints

Most Troubadours feel an irresistible urge to entertain; few Troubadours worthy of the name will turn aside from a chance to perform. The typical Troubadour loves being the center of attention; his performances delight the audience, stroke his often-healthy ego, and let him feel the exhilarating flow of magic when he "weaves" a song or tale.

Most Troubadours also feel an insatiable curiosity about the world and an intense desire to share what he has learned with those around him. It is a rare Troubadour that passes up a chance to learn a new tale or song. Upon arriving in a new town, many Troubadours seek out the tales and songs native to the area. Many ambitious Troubadours like to tell tales no one has heard before, and often seek out travelers or adventurers to learn the stories of their exploits.

Most Troubadours recognize their own significant role in the spreading of legends and take great pride in that role. As they travel across Barsaive, Troubadours carry with them the knowledge of different peoples and places. By spreading such knowledge, they "weave" the scattered peoples of Barsaive together into a single, unified tapestry.

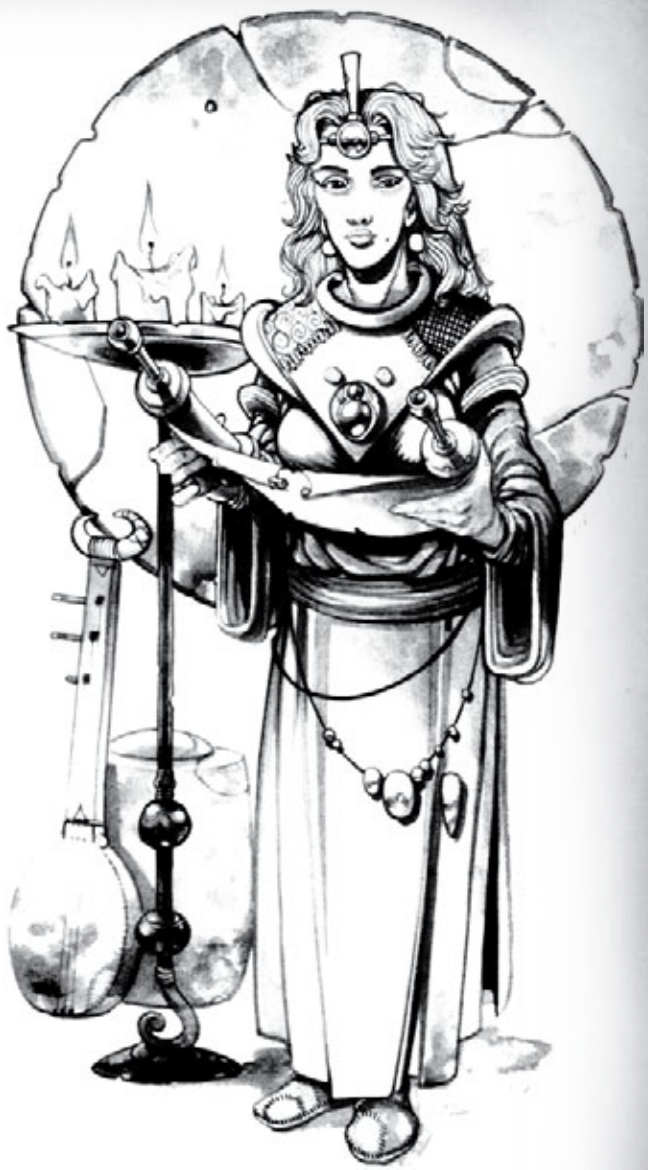
Discipline Violations

A Troubadour's duty to conserve knowledge and share it through entertainment lies at the heart of the Discipline, and nearly every Troubadour understands his role as a weaver of life's tapestry. A Troubadour may violate his Discipline by turning aside from that role; the guilt he feels in letting down not only himself, but all of Barsaive, erodes the edge of his concentration and triggers a talent crisis.

Appropriate Deeds of Atonement for Troubadours usually involve somehow "mending the tear in the tapestry of society" caused by his irresponsibility.

Rituals of Advancement

Troubadour rituals always require a performance of some kind, which may include participation in a play, a dramatic reading, singing, or even storytelling.



Recruitment: A Troubadour may observe that her performance truly enthralls one observer. After the show the Troubadour may engage the observer in conversation, then begin a story or ballad. Breaking off partway through, the Troubadour asks, "And what do you suppose happened next?" If the candidate answers entertainingly, the Troubadour may offer apprenticeship. After months of training, the Troubadour initiates the apprentice into the Discipline's First Circle.

Novice (2–4): The adept helps an elder of Fifth Circle or higher to stage a performance, providing accompaniment or moving equipment as asked. During the performance, the elder grants the adept time alone on stage. The adept needs to entertain the audience well enough it does not miss the "master."

Journeyman (5–8): The adept recounts his most recent adventure to a large audience that includes an elder of Ninth Circle or higher. The account should include use of appropriate talents and Karma. The elder acknowledges the adept's advancement following the performance.

Warden (9–12): The adept hosts a banquet and invites every Troubadour in the area. The adept's performance marks the party's climax. When all Troubadours in the audience rise in a standing ovation, the ritual is complete.

Ghost Master Ritual: The adept impersonates the desired ghost master to entertain an audience, performing an hour of the master's repertoire. During the performance, the adept develops a super-

natural resemblance to the master. As soon as the audience leaves, the ghost master ritual proceeds as normal.

Specialists and Advancement Rituals

Because their approaches to the Discipline place less importance on performance, sages and map-makers have different rituals of recruitment and advancement, as described below.

Recruitment Rituals: Both sages and mapmakers recruit new adepts privately, identifying likely candidates and either reciting to them long passages from obscure sagas or odes (sages) or asking them to draw from memory a detailed map of their home and its environs (mapmakers). Those candidates who successfully repeat substantial portions of these passages to the sage, or draw a sufficiently detailed and accurate map, may be invited to join the Discipline. Both types of candidates often undergo years of training before reaching First Circle.

Novice (2–4): The sage adept memorizes the entire text of a historically significant treatise or factually accurate song or epic and recites it in the presence of his instructor. The mapmaker adept studies an existing map for as long as he thinks necessary, then draws it from memory in the presence of his instructor. At higher Circles, the map used for the ritual becomes more and more detailed.

Journeyman (5–8): The sage adept composes a new treatise, or factually accurate ode or saga in the style of an existing work selected by his instructor. At higher Circles, the "model" selected becomes more obscure. The mapmaker adept goes on a two-day journey. When he returns, he must draw a detailed map of the journey in the presence of his instructor.

Warden (9–12): The sage adept analyses the composition of a historically significant text or song to discover the author's specific influences, then defends his analysis against rigorous peer review. The mapmaker adept must read or listen to a historical ode or saga, then in the presence of his instructor create a detailed map of the region in which the saga took place.

Ghost Master Ritual: The sage adept meditates over an original copy of a work created by his desired ghost master. He memorizes the entire text and recites it word for word. At the end of the recitation, the ghost master appears and the ritual continues as normal. The mapmaker adept draws from memory a detailed map of an area that had some significance in the life of his desired ghost master (his place of birth, for example, or the region where he first became famous). At some point in the process, the ghost master guides the adept's hand to include details of which the adept was unaware. The ghost master appears when the map is complete, and the ritual continues as normal.

Discipline Combinations

Troubadours are usually drawn toward Disciplines that revere or preserve knowledge, like the Wizard, or Disciplines that have an affinity for performance. The Illusionist is a popular choice, because their abilities can greatly enhance a Troubadour's performance.

Because many Troubadours prefer an audience, solitary Disciplines like the Thief or Archer don't generally appeal as a secondary Discipline. The Sky Raider Discipline generally promotes bold action at the expense of introspection, and also rarely appeals to Troubadours.

The Weaponsmith Discipline holds an interesting position in relation to the Troubadour. Weaponsmiths traditionally have strong ties to the community, and also value knowledge, which appeals to some Troubadours. Others feel that the Weaponsmith is too insular, spending too much time in his forge instead of out among the people.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Detect Falsehood, Hypnotize, Incite Mob, Lion Spirit, Multi-Tongue, Rally, Thought Link, Warning Shot

Ninth Circle

Encore: Taking 1 Strain, the adept announces his intention to use a Charisma-based ability twice instead of once in a combat round. He uses the ability twice, but receives a –3 penalty to any Test made for the ability. If the ability uses a Standard Action, he takes an additional 2 Strain. Encore can only be used once per combat round.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Bardic Voice

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Song of Deflection

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Mind Wave

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Detect Influence

Master

Talent Options: Blood Guilt Weapon, Champion Challenge, Life Check, Safe Thought, Second Chance, Truth Skit

Thirteenth Circle

Ghost Song: The adept uses this ability to write a song. When the adept dies, his spirit wanders the earth singing or reciting the song. The adept may use the song to suggest an action that would put his spirit to rest. The spirit travels to its final resting place if a living Namegiver fulfills the conditions of the song. The adept may change his Ghost Song any number of times while he is alive.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Aura Armor

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: First Ring of Perfection

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Confront Horror

CHAPTER FIFTHTEEN

THE BATTLEFIELD PATH

The author of the following document is Bola, the obsidiman Warrior who recently led a successful mission against the Howling Scarf slaver band on behalf of the Kingdom of Throal. Bola's late arrival delayed the completion of this compendium—obsidimen rush for no one—but the account provides valuable insight into the way of the Warrior. To truly understand this account, you must also note what Bola chooses not to say.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Words. You ask me to explain the way of the Warrior in words. I say this is not possible, for the way of the Warrior is the way of action. It is bringing your sword down on the enemy's shield. It is raising your own shield to meet the enemy's thrust. The way of the Warrior is not a way of thinking. It is not a way of talking. It is a way of action.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Life is a battlefield. At any moment, countless wars are waged. Some of these wars have yet to come to physical blows. All of them will. For today's Barsaive is a place where the sword and the battle-axe eventually solve all arguments. And so I shall speak of actions. I shall tell you of the great Warrior of my people: Berahnt, of the Age of Legends.

Berahnt had won renown for his deeds. But one day Berahnt grew weary. He had seen too much blood spilled. He no longer thirsted for victory. He wanted only rest. And so Berahnt left his old comrades, left the battlefields and journeyed to a place known as the Land of Green in search of peace.

Now the Land of Green was inhabited by tribes of humans. Unknown to Berahnt, these humans were at war with one another, struggling for control of a watering hole known as Garlen's Bounty. The watering hole was large and provided more than enough water for both tribes. But each fought to possess it entirely, for neither could bear to see the other prosper. However, Garlen's Bounty was easy to overrun and nearly impossible to defend. And so neither side could hold the site.

Berahnt sought only to while away his final days in solitude and contemplation, and so he built himself a hut far from the watering hole. But soon humans of the first tribe, the Sadar, came upon his hut. Though he did them no harm, they attacked him. He easily defeated them, severely injuring their soldiers and driving them off. The wounded Sadar returned to their elders and told their tale. The Sadar elders were clever. Instead of seeking vengeance, they decided to win Berahnt to their side. For the Land of Green was so isolated that the way of the Warrior had not yet reached them, and they wished Berahnt to initiate their soldiers into the Discipline and lead them to victory against their foes, the Radas.

Meanwhile, the Radas too stumbled upon Berahnt's hut and set upon the Warrior without cause. And like their enemies, they learned a painful lesson and were driven off. Then they reported to their elders, who came to the same conclusion as those of the Sadar village.

As the Passions would have it, ambassadors from both the Sadar and Radas appeared before Berahnt at the same time. Both petitioned for the knowledge that would enable them to destroy their foes forever. Berahnt refused both requests. Instead, he attempted to broker a peace between the two tribes, but they would have none of it. Both ambassadors left, swearing vengeance upon Berahnt.

In the months that followed, Radas and Sadar raiding parties came to bring Berahnt to heel, destroying his peace again and again. Each time Berahnt drove them off, and each time he hoped that they would cease their pointless assaults against him. But finally he realized they would never yield.

So Berahnt went to Garlen's Bounty, which was then possessed by the Radas. He killed each and every Radas there. The Sadar then rejoiced and attacked Berahnt, believing they would finally win their goal. But Berahnt slew each and every Sadar as well, and Garlen's Bounty ran red with the blood of the slain. Sickened, Berahnt returned to his hut, where he whiled away the rest of his days in peace.

The lesson of this story should be obvious. But for those who are not Warriors, it is this. No one despises battle more than the Warrior, who has done his share of fighting and smelled the stink of death in his nose too many times. But too many times the only solution to a problem is war, for too often Namegivers thirst for violence instead of reason. And when those times come, it is the Warrior who prevails.

The story also contains another important lesson—the Warrior never provokes a battle, but the Warrior always finishes one.

—Mot of Haven

THE SHIELD

Two tools are of paramount importance to any Warrior. These are the shield and the sword. All Warriors must know how to use them and must respect their importance. The following story, from the Age of Dragons, teaches this.

Once there lived two comrades-in-arms—a cavalier of a rich dwarf kingdom and her squire, an ork Warrior. The dwarf, a Swordmaster called Avani, had once held the ork, Kodan, as

a slave. But the dwarf had freed him many years before, for Kodan had saved his mistress' life on more than one occasion. Together they walked the way of the hero.

As their legend reached its greatest height, their path took them, bound and shackled as prisoners, to the court of the dragon known as All-Wings. For it was a time when dragons ruled the land, and other Namegivers built legends at their peril. The mighty All-Wings reared up above the two prisoners and announced that they must die for their crimes against dragonkind. The Swordmaster attempted to mollify All-Wings with silky words. The Warrior remained silent. The dragon let the Swordmaster talk until she was exhausted and could speak no more. Then All-Wings smiled. It is not good when a dragon smiles.

"I have decided, in my unquestioned mercy, to make a gesture to the unscaled peoples," All-Wings said. "I shall slay only one of you. I shall permit the other to return to your lands to warn of the dangers of such effrontery as you have shown."

Avani and Kodan looked at one another with dismay. They had pledged their loyalty to one another, and neither wished to live at the other's expense.

The dragon observed this and said, "You seem disappointed. To further show my beneficence, I shall award the survivor a great treasure. In fact, your choice of treasure shall determine who shall live and who shall die. Which of you will make the correct choice?

"I offer to one of you a shield—a shield I shall peel from my own back," the dragon said. "It shall be called All-Protector."

And All-Wings pulled a gigantic scale from his shoulder and tossed it on the ground in front of the Swordmaster and the Warrior, where it lay dripping with ichor.

"And I offer the other a mighty sword, plucked from my own mouth," All-Wings said. "It shall be called All-Biter.

Which of you wishes which prize? Whoever chooses wisely shall live."

And All-Wings drew from her mouth one of her vast and rotting incisors, which pulsed with a great magical aura. Kodan nodded to Avani. He would allow her to make the choice, for he felt he owed her his life.

"As a Swordmaster, the choice is obvious," Avani said. "I shall take All-Biter."

"It is foolish to take a sword when you can take a shield," the dragon said. "If one lunges and misses, one is not harmed. But if one is struck and has no shield, one is doomed."

And with that, All-Wings blew her gross and corrupt breath upon Avani, and the breath tore the meat from the dwarf's bones. Then All-Wings ordered Kodan's bonds removed so he could step forward and claim his prize, the shield All-Protector.

"As we agreed, you shall now go forth and warn the world of my wrath,' the dragon said.

"I made no such agreement," the Warrior replied. And Kodan stepped forward, seizing both All-Protector and All-Biter. The dragon blew its foul breath upon Kodan, but All-Protector absorbed and deflected it. Kodan plunged All-Biter deep into All-Wings' left eye, and the great dragon was slain. Kodan himself was killed as well, crushed beneath the foul lizard's horrendous bulk.

This story teaches wisdom and honor. It teaches wisdom because, indeed, it is better to avoid a strike than to strike. The sword takes life, but the shield preserves it. Thus the shield is of greater importance than the sword. It teaches honor because Kodan's pledge of loyalty was worth more to him than his own life. No Warrior wishes to die. But if one has a choice between losing life and losing honor, the Warrior chooses to keep his honor. For the time all of us have upon this world, even we obsidimen, is short compared to the length of legend. It is better to be remembered as honorable than to be forgotten as a coward.

But do not mistake foolishness for bravery. A Warrior must know which battles his honor depends on, and which it does not. Most battles are foolish and without meaning. These include battles over coin, battles that arise from hot tempers, and battles fueled by a desire to prove prowess. Those who die in foolish battles die foolishly and are remembered as fools. But when a battle holds true meaning, when the stakes are heroic, retreat is not a choice. The true Warrior knows this and is prepared always to face the consequences.

For a man of action, Bola seems quite verbose. A Warrior need only remember this ancient proverb. A hero who dies for a foolish cause dies a fool. A fool who does for a heroic cause dies a hero.

—Elgor of Throal

THE SWORD

When a Warrior speaks of the shield and the sword, he speaks of symbols. In this case, the word "sword" is a symbol for all weapons, be they spear, axe, dagger, spear, club or hammer. Here is a story of the importance of the sword, or the weapon, to the Warrior.

On the deck of the sky ship Darting Moon, the elven Warrior Uvenia faced Haracha, the brigand queen. Uvenia had been hired by the merchants of the Kingdom of Cara Fahd to harass and bedevil

the unruly Sky Raiders whenever they raided the kingdom. Uvenia's forces had done much harm to the Sky Raiders, and now the brigands reveled in their opportunity for vengeance. The Warrior stood on the ship's deck, disarmed, stripped of her armor, shackled at the ankles. Blood ran down her forehead and into her eyes. Haracha laughed and unsheathed her cutlass.

"You do not laugh at us now, do you, elf?" the massive troll sneered.

"I do not laugh at my enemies, for laughter implies overconfidence," Uvenia replied.

"You certainly have no need to be confident now," laughed Haracha, "for I have a blade, and you have none." Uvenia readied herself for death. For while Sky Raiders may show loyalty to their own kind, they do not love honor as we do. But Haracha surprised her.

"But I will show you my queenly mercy and give you a weapon," Haracha said. "Which weapon do you choose?" Uvenia replied that she would have the same weapon that Haracha intended to use.

"Ah, but a cutlass is a weapon for a real fighter, for a Sky Raider," scoffed Haracha. "I am afraid that a mere Warrior would cut herself on it. No, it would not be safe for you."

Uvenia looked about the deck at the brigands. She spotted a cudgel and asked for that. Haracha refused. She asked for a dagger. Haracha refused. She asked for a staff. Haracha refused. Uvenia realized the pirate was merely toying with her, seeking to draw out her humiliation.

Finally Uvenia said, "I request as my weapon the pearled pin that holds your hair in place."

The brigands laughed. Haracha, laughing, pulled the hairpin from her hair. "Yes, this puny weapon is the most that a mere Warrior can handle."

In that moment, as Haracha's unbraided hair obscured her vision, Uvenia threw herself forward and knocked the brigand queen to the deck. She seized the hairpin and held it over Haracha's right eye.

"Unlock these shackles," Uvenia commanded.

In the end, with Haracha's life still in her hands, she forced the Sky Raiders to agree to never again set foot within the bounds of Cara Fahd.

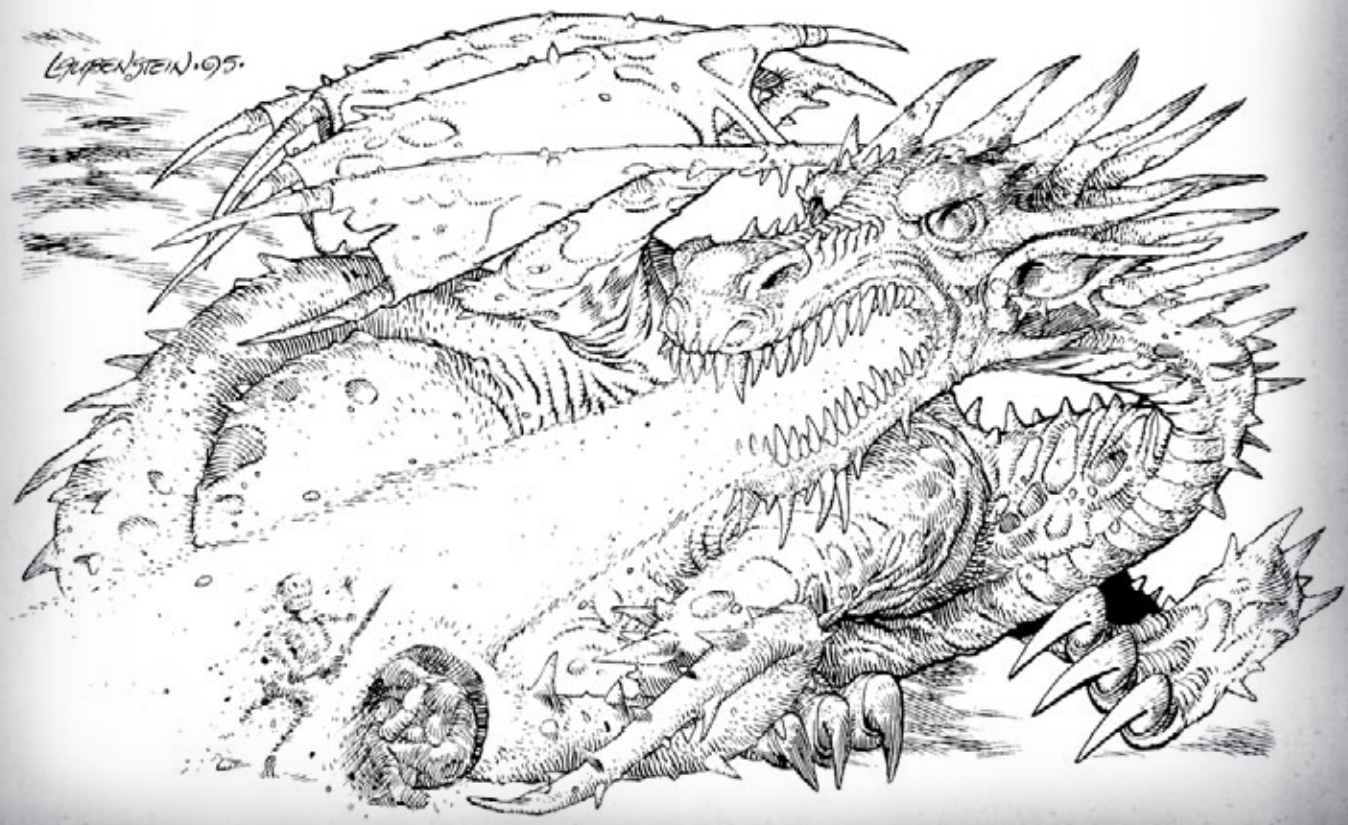
This story teaches us that the Warrior must not forget that she, herself, is her best weapon. This is why the Warrior attaches no special significance to any single sword or axe or spear. For we Warriors cannot depend on objects for our victories. We must depend on ourselves. If a sword is dropped on the battlefield, pick up another and go on. If an axe is shattered, mourn it not. If no proper weapon is available, use a chair or a flagon or a rock. The Warrior assesses the situation and adapts to it. The Warrior needs no flying ship, no charging mount, no particular blade. For weapons do not make the Warrior. The Warrior makes a weapon of whatever is at hand.

This is the first lesson I learned, and the first I teach to all who would seek to become a Warrior. The Warrior's wits are his greatest weapon. Learn this lesson, and none will ever defeat you.

—Val of the Serpent

THE ENEMY

The Warrior's path commands him to battle others and defeat them. Many times this means slaying the enemy. But the Warrior has no love of bloodshed. If the Warrior can win without killing, he will do so. But victory without death is often difficult. For in battle, the Warrior must put the enemy down and defeat him. And many enemies will not surrender as long as life flows through them. And so the Warrior must not hesitate to kill when victory demands it. Anyone foolish enough to oppose a Warrior assumes the risks of battle. They may well die beneath our blades. But the Warrior does not slay unless forced to. A Warrior will not stoop to deliver a killing blow to an unconscious foe, especially when other enemies remain standing. We Warriors are fighters, not butchers. Generals may order the slaughter of the fallen, but they are unwise if they expect Warriors to take part.



The Warrior does not harbor hate in his heart. The Warrior has honor in his heart. Hate may propel the inferior Namegiver into battle against the foe. But hate is a dangerous distraction to the Warrior. When we strike, we do so with efficiency and caution. Our minds must remain clear.

When we are paid to battle an enemy, we do so—and we prevail. But the Warrior bears no grudges. The enemy of the moment is the Warrior's only concern. Last week's enemy is a diversion; next week's enemy is a diversion. Only the enemy of the moment matters. I shall tell a tale to drive home my point.

In the aftermath of the Orichalcum Wars, a great force of mounted raiders known as the Green Horse Riders roamed the land. Made up of remnants of the many armies shattered by the Theran Navy in the last days of that conflict, the Riders had gathered together under the leadership of the dwarf Chesero and resorted to brigandage. The Kingdom of Throal hired the mercenary order known as the Down-Striped Band to break the Green Horse Riders and end their unlawful actions against traveling caravans. The Warrior Burnica led the Down-Striped Band.

Now, Burnica happened to be the younger half-brother of Chesero. Chesero had left home many years before, soon after the mysterious death of his stepfather—Burnica's father. Therefore, many suspected Chesero of the crime. As a young dwarf, Burnica had sworn cruel vengeance upon his half-brother. But his initiation into the way of the Warrior required him to surrender all of his old hatreds. These went into the fire to make way for the clarity of mind and purpose of the true Warrior. Many years passed, and Burnica distinguished himself as a leader and a true traveler upon our battlefield path.

But now fate, acting through the Kingdom of Throal, made Chesero his foe once more. And so Burnica undertook his Karma rituals with renewed purpose, hoping to prevent his old feelings from clouding his mind. For Chesero was not the traitorous kin, not the slayer of Burnica's father. He was simply the enemy.

Three battles the Down-Striped Band fought with the Green Horse Raiders. The Down-Striped Band tasted defeat in the first two engagements, for the maneuverability and speed of the Cavalrymen proved decisive. Finally, during the third battle, the Warriors boxed the Raiders inside a canyon. After the Warriors decimated the front ranks of the riders, the Green Horse Raiders began to surrender. Soon Chesero replaced his banner with the white flag of surrender.

Chesero rode forth, humbled. Burnica prepared for his half-brother to lay his spear at his feet in a gesture of submission. Instead, Chesero threw an axe at Burnica and broke through the ranks of the Down-Striped Band to escape through the canyon mouth. His threats against Burnica hung in the air behind him as he vanished in the distance.

Seven years later, Burnica found himself leading a small band of fighters in the place now called the Badlands. He was charged with the task of finding and destroying a nest of Horrors. As the fighters drew nearer to the nest, they spotted another small group beset by the creatures. Most of these fighters had been slain already. And so Burnica and his band moved into to relieve them, even after he saw that their leader was Chesero.

Finally, the Horrors were slain, and Chesero, weary and wounded, collapsed against a rocky cliff face.

"Ah, my half-brother, you have come to slay me at last," Chesero said when he recognized Burnica. "Perhaps it is fitting. For I did indeed slay your father, for what now seems to have been a trivial slight. I have no wish to die, but I have no breath left and cannot defend myself. Stab me square in the heart, so I shall expire quickly."

To this Burnica replied, "I shall not slay you, for you are not my enemy. Fate may once again will that you be my enemy. If that day comes, I shall slay you without hesitation. But today, Chesero, you are not my foe."

This "enemy of the moment" gibberish is all very fine, but I have heard of many Warriors who bore grudges long after battle. In the Caucavic Mountains, in fact, Warriors often battle one another to avenge losses suffered by their sires, grandsires, and even great grandsires.

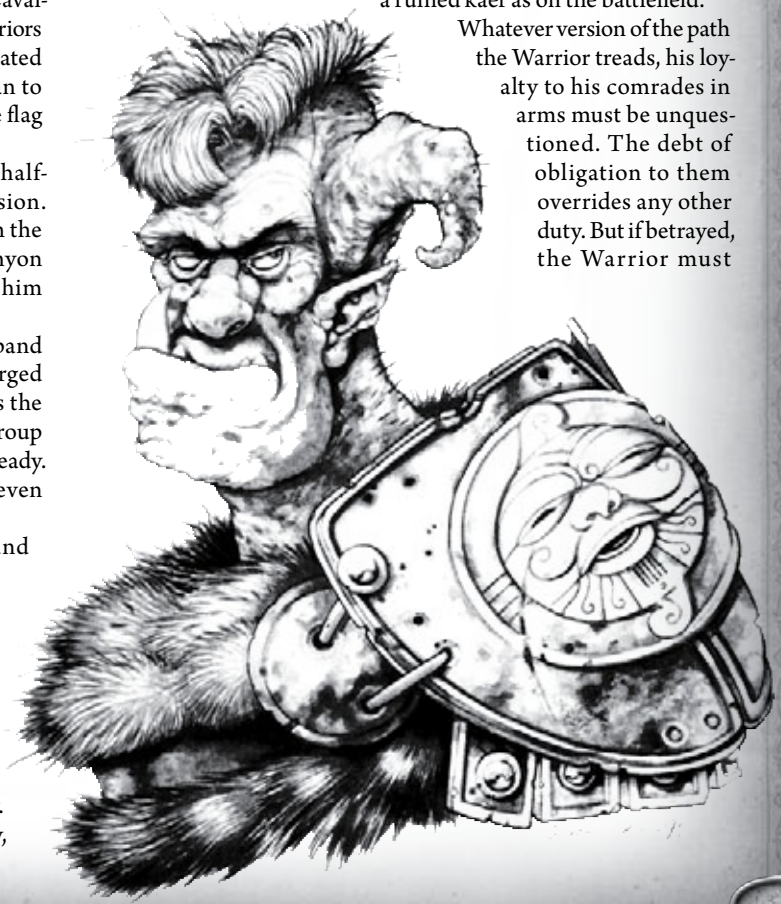
—Damris the Unforgiving

LOYALTY

To a Warrior, loyalty is as valuable as honor. Indeed, loyalty and honor cannot be separated. Some Warriors serve as soldiers in standing armies, such as those of Throal and Thera. Such Warriors pledge their loyalties to the monarch they serve. They believe in the aims and ideals of the kingdoms they protect. To betray those ideals is to betray themselves and the Warrior's way.

Many more Warriors serve in mercenary companies, traveling throughout Barsaive in search of work. Others wait for employers to seek them out. The mercenary Warrior pledges his loyalty to the employer who pays him best. Once purchased, the mercenary Warrior's loyalty is as unswerving as that of any other Warrior. The mercenary Warrior will never break a signed contract, for he views the contract as a sacred trust. However, the mercenary Warrior knows the pitfalls of the poorly drafted contract. He relies on the well-crafted contract, which enables a Warrior to refuse orders that force him to act dishonorably. And should the employer fail to uphold his side of the bargain, the loyalty he purchased is no longer due. Only a fool would breach a contract with a mercenary Warrior, for a mercenary quickly will turn all of his attention to the recovery of moneys owed to him. History is full of petty rulers deposed by mercenary Warriors they sought to cheat.

Still other Warriors join small adventuring bands. Whether fighting or searching for treasure, the Warrior can prove a valuable comrade. The Warrior is adaptable; his abilities serve him as well in a ruined kaer as on the battlefield.



Whatever version of the path the Warrior treads, his loyalty to his comrades in arms must be unquestioned. The debt of obligation to them overrides any other duty. But if betrayed, the Warrior must

avenge his honor. The Warrior does not hate the traitor, for no crime justifies poisoning the heart with rancor. Nevertheless, the Warrior must hunt down the traitor and end his life. For a traitor continues to betray others until brought to heel. When betrayed, a Warrior has a duty to the world to remove the transgressor from its bosom.

Training

Advancement on the battlefield path is not a matter of books or libraries. It is learned through action. It is learned in the sinews and marrow of the body. The aptitude of the true Warrior reveals itself only through the rehearsal of the arts of war. Few youngsters in our violent world do not learn to play with toy shields and swords. The potential Warrior soon feels the pull of the weapon and shield in her hands, even when they are but playthings. One day, the youngster simply knows that she is a Warrior. Then it is only a matter of time.

Typically the Warrior-to-be seeks out an "order" of Warriors, whether it be a mercenary order or a standing army. She applies as a squire. Masters of the order, instructed in the rudiments of each beginning talent, test the squire. Those who truly have the aptitude are sent out to drill in these procedures. And drill, and drill. Typically, the student drills for many months before achieving her goal: an abrupt flash of understanding that is the soldier's initiation. For some, this point never comes; they are not cut out for the Warrior path. Others progress and continue to learn new talents as they build their legends. Each time, they must seek a master of the talent, who explains the talent's fundamentals. Then the Warrior goes to the drilling ground and attempts to put these fundamentals into practice. Training becomes simply a matter of doing, and doing, and doing, until the Warrior's pattern connects to the pattern of the talent. Then the Warrior has mastered it, and that is that.

It is as the great Warrior Kwai the Potent once said:
only after one has swung a sword a thousand
times does one begin to learn how to swing a sword.

—Trebor of the Dragon Mountains

Warrior Orders

Optional Rule: Players and gamemasters who want to more deeply explore the possibility of a Warrior being part of a Warrior Order can use the following rules and guidelines.

Warrior Orders can be used as a character background, but can also be used during play. A Warrior who is part of an order often finds it easier to find a suitable teacher for Circle advancement. However, most orders focus on one aspect of a Discipline, so they might only teach a limited number of Talent options, or even require their members to pick certain Talent options. This is often true of orders focusing on unarmed combat, or in weapon-shield combinations. In addition, training often is free of monetary charge, but the adept is required to act as a teacher himself, either promising to do so one day, or before receiving training. This makes advancement more time-consuming. Warrior Orders may impose other restrictions on the adept, such as attendance at order celebrations and gatherings, wearing of insignia, recruitment of new members, and acting in the order's interests.

If players have a good idea for their favored Talent options at character creation, they can design a Warrior Order fitting that choice of options and create a flavorful character background and origin. The gamemaster is encouraged to use this to further his stories and everyone's enjoyment.

Game Information

Roleplaying Hints

A Warrior tends to be honest, taciturn, and occasionally impatient. He usually speaks plainly and openly, and expects others to do the same. He admires doers and regards with suspicion those who talk too much. He often tries getting things done in the simplest, most straightforward manner possible. Though an expert in the art of war, the average Warrior does not love combat; rather, he sees fighting as a nasty job that needs doing and takes pride in his ability to do it well. To many Warriors, bloodthirsty thoughts or behavior are improper; the true Warrior views his enemy dispassionately and fights with his mind unclouded by rage or hatred.

Unlike adepts of other Disciplines, who usually seek out people different from them, many Warriors would like nothing more than to spend their time in the company of other Warriors. Some even choose to live apart from the rest of society in small "soldier" orders composed entirely of adepts and structured like a military unit. Roving mercenary bands may also call their groupings "orders," even if they have no permanent settlements. The tight discipline and camaraderie of all these orders makes them feared opponents on the battlefield.

Nearly all Warriors value loyalty, whether to comrades or employers. Many mercenary orders are known for loyalty to their rary and serving a greater cause. A soldier's sense of honor often means that he will die defending his nation's interests, but few true Warriors will stupidly sacrifice themselves to avenge a slight or insult to that nation or kingdom. Warrior characters in adventuring bands tend to feel loyalty toward members of their group, even members they may personally dislike.

Discipline Violations

Many different actions may violate the Warrior Discipline and provoke a talent crisis. A Warrior who betrays the interests of his group or creates disunity within it; who acts out of personal vengeance or hatred instead of against the current enemy of his group; who reneges on a promise sworn to on his Warrior's honor or on a signed contract; who becomes paralyzed by indecision; or who cold-bloodedly murders a defenseless opponent may suffer a talent crisis. A Warrior who fails to eliminate a traitor to his group has almost certainly committed a Discipline violation. Taking down the traitor would be an appropriate Deed of Atonement.

Rituals of Advancement

Like Cavalrymen, Warriors frequently belong to organized orders that offer standard promotions and appropriate ceremonies. Player character Warriors generally avoid or eventually leave these orders and develop unique advancement rituals.

Recruitment: Organized Warrior groups continuously tour Barsaive, visiting small villages and isolated kaers and painting rosy pictures of the excitement of military or monastic life. Their tales and impressive uniforms, armors, or robes lure young men and women to enlist in their ranks. (Few orders mix genders in their ranks, though most mix races.) Reaching First Circle can require years of practice and study.

Novice (2–4): Adepts engage in regular contests of skill against their peers. Companies stage these privately, but independent Warriors often stage them at public festivals. Elders supervise all contests, and afterward acknowledge those adepts who demonstrated mastery of the talents required to rise to the next Circle, whether or not the adepts won their contests.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept must win a contest of skill against an opponent of equal abilities, fought on unusually demanding terrain. This may include battling atop an array of tall pillars, barefoot amid broken glass, in the deepest reaches of a deserted kaer, and so on. Note: Though rituals of advancement should be restricted to the roleplaying of a significant event, the gamemaster may declare that the adept loses the contest and must try again after a week of practice. This may serve many ends in pursuit of a good story.

Warden (9–12): Choosing one or several types of difficult terrain, the adept stages an exhibition of physical skill (either armed or unarmed) against an almost-overwhelming number of opponents of equal or lesser skill. A panel of respected Warriors must observe this exhibition.

Ghost Master Ritual: Like a Swordmaster, the Warrior summons a ghost master by mentally fighting that master within a circle. After an hour of unarmed combat, the mental image materializes as the master, who handily defeats the Warrior. The ritual proceeds as normal.

Discipline Combinations

The Weaponsmith is the most natural second Discipline for Warriors because their practical minds recognize the opportunity that Discipline gives them to improve the lethality of their weapons.

Most Warriors find it surprisingly difficult, however, to take up additional fighting Disciplines as a way of enhancing their prowess in combat. The superior attitude most Warriors hold toward the other combat Disciplines gets in their way; they tend to see the Swordmaster as unnecessarily flashy and prone to take foolish risks, the Sky Raider and occasionally the Cavalryman as a bloodthirsty brigand who enjoys killing for its own sake, and the Archer as too inclined toward mysticism. On the whole, though, the Archer and Cavalryman Disciplines appeal more to Warriors than Sky Raiders or Swordmasters. Some famous mercenary orders include crack cavalry or archery units, and though tensions exist between the Warriors and the Archers and Cavalrymen, those tensions usually manifest as a friendly rivalry.

Many Warriors turn toward the Nethermancer Discipline late in life, after having dispatched great numbers of enemies on the battlefield. The Warrior's need to fight without hatred predisposes him to regret the killing that he must do more than followers of the other fighting Disciplines, and may seek the Nethermancer's path to find solace in the idea that death is not a final end, but a beginning. Warriors may also be drawn to the Elementalist's way; because many Warrior rituals ground the Warrior in the elements, the spells of the Elementalist Discipline come naturally to the Warrior.

Warriors have a particularly hard time adopting the Illusionist, Thief and Troubadour Disciplines. The Illusionist and Thief both rely on deception, which the Warrior usually regards as anathema, and the Troubadour Discipline requires a love of performance that most Warriors do not share.

Warden

Talent Options: Battle Bellow, Body Blade, Critical Hit, Frenzy, Matrix Strike, Shield Beater, Spirit Strike, Steel Thought

Ninth Circle

Battlefield Awareness: For 3 Strain, the adept finds an extraordinary mental focus and awareness in combat. For the next 3 rounds, he ignores any Harried penalties, and cannot be Blindsided, Stunned, or Surprised.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Earth Skin

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Resist Pain

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Vitality

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Unmount

Master

Talent Options: Ethereal Weapon, Mind Blade, Rushing Attack, Second Chance, Vital Strike, Weapon Breaker

Thirteenth Circle

Resurrect Self: When the adept makes a Life Check Test, but before any dice are rolled, the player may declare that the adept is resurrecting himself. He may then spend any number of Karma Points on the Life Check Test. The Karma Points spent when using this ability are permanently lost; the adept reduces his Maximum Karma by the number of Karma Points spent on the Life Check Test (this has no effect on his Karma Ritual Rank, only the result of the calculation).
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Stone Skin

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Multi-Strike

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell and +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Aura Armor

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE VALUE OF STRONG ARMS AND STRONGER MINDS

The following text was prepared by Dermatt of Haven, a well-known and highly respected Weaponsmith. His account is one of the most straightforward, informative pieces I received for the book and provides an excellent introduction to the way of the Weaponsmith. Dermatt also requested I extend an invitation to all readers to stop by his Forge when in Haven.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

So, Merrox is putting together another one of his books, is he? All about adepts this time. Well, I'm glad to see you've decided to give a Weaponsmith a chance to speak up. Of all the adepts, we're probably the least understood. Weaponsmiths? Oh, those fellows that pound steel and make weapons and armor, right? Well, we do make weapons and armor, the best you'll find. But we do so much more. Weaponsmiths live in the world, not just on it. During our travels we speak with the people of Barsaive. We learn of their hopes, dreams and disappointments.

We Weaponsmiths stick together like adepts of no other Discipline, for the bonds of our Forges are as strong as those of any family. Weaponsmiths are a tightly knit group, able to rely on each other for damn near anything. If a Weaponsmith shows up at his Forge in need, his fellow adepts will do whatever they can to help him out. Much of our camaraderie and closeness stems from our shared dedication to our work. Just look around—I'll wager a week's work you can't find a group of adepts who, as a whole, are as dedicated as we. A Weaponsmith says something is going to get done, it gets done. Take my word for it.

You seek proof? Look at this. It's called a heartblade. I've been working on mine for near to six years now and haven't come close to finishing it. Everything I am—heart, soul and mind—has gone into making this. At some point in his life, just about every Weaponsmith gets the desire to make a heartblade. It represents the ultimate combination of art and technique, for a heartblade is as individual as its maker and as important to the Weaponsmith as his eyes or hands. Heartblades are proof of what we are, of the strength of our Discipline.

The same dedication that makes us single-minded enough to create heartblades also provided us with the strength to resist the bane of our time. Horrors hate Weaponsmiths, because we know better than any other adepts how to strengthen our resolve against them. So if you go after Horrors, you best bring a few of us along with you.

But dedication is only one of the unique characteristics of Weaponsmiths. We're also close to the people. Our Forges serve as meeting places, schools for apprentices, and common areas for people of all types. They come in, talk to us while we work, watch us shape metal into objects both lethal and beautiful. They tell us things, sometimes ask us to deliver messages to other people, for some of us travel quite a bit.

In these ways, Weaponsmiths become the ties that bind people together. Perhaps this is why ours has become the most enduring Discipline. Some even claim the way of the Weaponsmith was the first Discipline, and that all the other Disciplines grew from it. That may be—seems like every Discipline comes back to us, at any rate.

So remember that. Any group of adepts that heads off looking for legend better bring a Weaponsmith along just in case you need a weapon identified, or a blade fixed, or something remembered, or a Horror faced down—because nobody's better at any of that than a Weaponsmith.

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Though I do not wish to contradict the steemed author of this text, I feel I must. To imply that Weaponsmiths alone bear the dedication needed to fight off the Horrors is simply absurd.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

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ON BECOMING A WEAPONSMITH

We Weaponsmiths form guilds known as Forges. Our Forges provide us with places to meet and work and also a steady supply of new recruits. Unlike the Disciplines of the Swordmaster or Warrior, you won't find too many young ones that want to run off and become Weaponsmiths. More often than not, they sort of slide into the Discipline. Usually, candidates start off working for us to make a little spending money. Some discover they enjoy the labor and stay for a while. Those who don't sometimes go off to become adepts of other Disciplines or find work more suited to them—work a little easier on the back and arms, usually.

Those who stay at the Forge, though, are rewarded handsomely. For Weaponsmiths watch over all who work for them, and anyone who stays at the Forge for more than a few months is recognized as adept material. These we introduce to more advanced forms of metalworking, watching as they work the iron to see whether or not they fall in tune with the metal. If they do, some member of the Forge "adopts" the worker and begins his apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship to a Weaponsmith is long and hard. The apprentice spends his days laboring at the bellows and anvil, hammering out horseshoes, shovel blades and other simple pieces of ironwork. The mentor watches every step of the apprentice's work, quick to criticize but slow to praise. An apprentice may spend a week learning how to form nails, constantly banging on tiny pieces of metal until they all come out just the right shape and size, with as little metal wasted as possible. Such tiring and tedious chores strengthen the resolve and attentiveness of the would-be adept, forging the dedication and iron will for which Weaponsmiths are known. Such training may seem harsh, but it is our way. The working of metal is a learned gift, not a birthright, and poorly done work insults both the metal itself and the mentor who trains the apprentice.

Such practice speaks well of the pragmatism and selflessness the way of the Weaponsmith instills in its followers. The problem of an ill-matched student and teacher is rarely overcome so easily in other Disciplines.

—Dorbulius of Throal

While the apprentice spends his days laboring over the forge and anvil, he spends his nights in deep study. The Weaponsmith must be well versed in all aspects of metalwork, including the history of the art. Apprentices study Weaponsmiths of the distant past, as well as the weapons those adepts created and the methods they used. This study forms the seed from which the Weaponsmith's well of knowledge will one day spring, the index of a mental encyclopedia. This is why I can say, without fear of boasting, that Weaponsmiths know more about weapon history than anyone else. If it can be known, a Weaponsmith somewhere knows it. Mark my words on this.

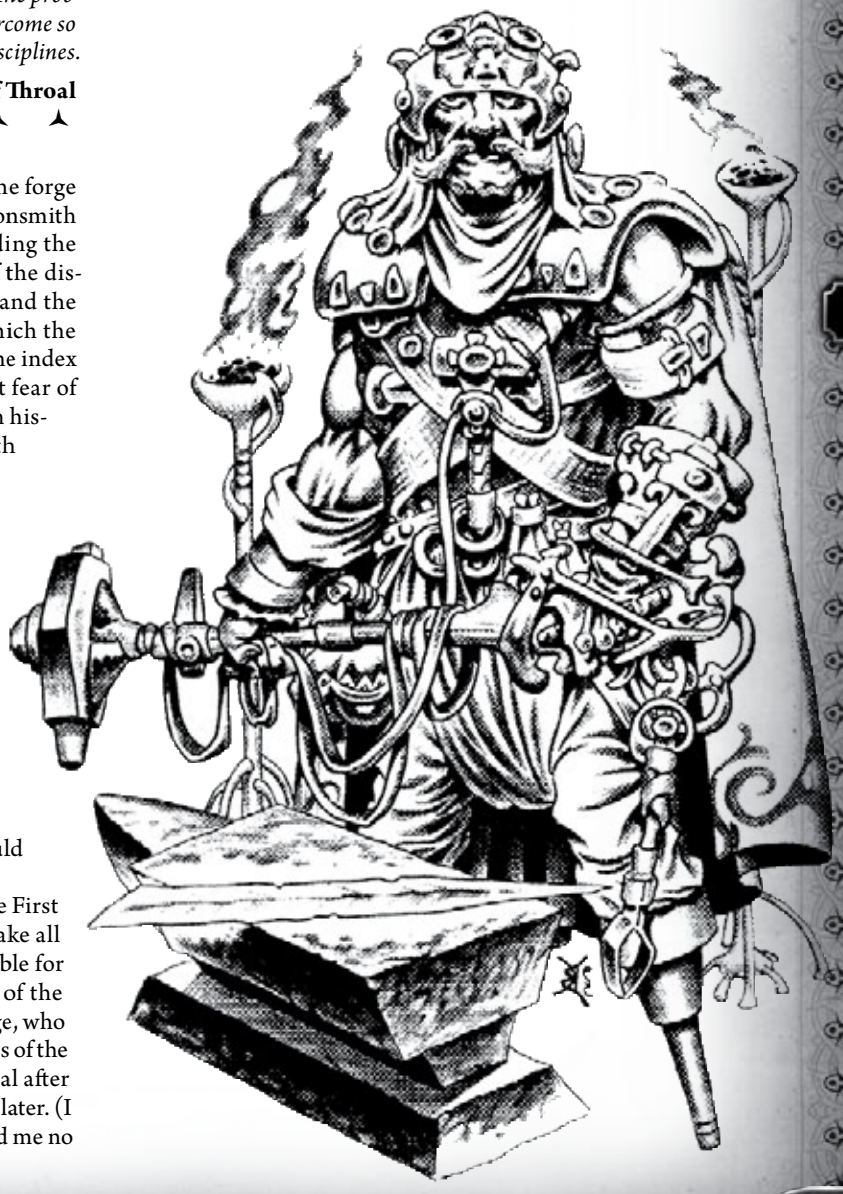
A Weaponsmith's apprenticeship lasts from six to eight months, depending on the aptitude of the apprentice and that of his master. In cases where apprentice and mentor are ill-suited to one another, the training can take much longer. If such an ill match forms, other members of the Forge may step in and assign the mentor a new apprentice and the apprentice a new mentor. There is no shame in this: talent has little to do with personality, which can play a major role in the instruction of apprentices. I myself have had more than one apprentice with whom I could not work. All were reassigned to different mentors, and all have turned out to be fine Weaponsmiths. I'm as proud of them as I would have been had I trained them myself.

After an apprentice has learned the requirements of the First Circle, he appears before the Forge elders. The elders make all major decisions concerning the Forge and are responsible for judging new recruits and approving the advancement of the Forge's members. The elders are elected by all at the Forge, who usually base their votes on the Circles and level-headedness of the elders. Most Weaponsmiths are considered elder material after reaching Tenth Circle, though some are chosen sooner or later. (I was chosen as an elder at Eighth Circle, which has earned me no end of honor.) Anyway, the apprentice must present the elders with a weapon he has forged himself. Typically, apprentices keep this simple, hammering out a nice little dagger or some such piece.

As I said before, though, the way of the Weaponsmith involves much more than pounding on iron and shaping blades. Apprentices also must display something else they've learned, perhaps by reciting the history of an ancient weapon or demonstrating some proficiency in wielding the weapon the apprentice has forged. Smiths need to be well-rounded, and no one becomes an adept without showing he can make his way in the world if he must.

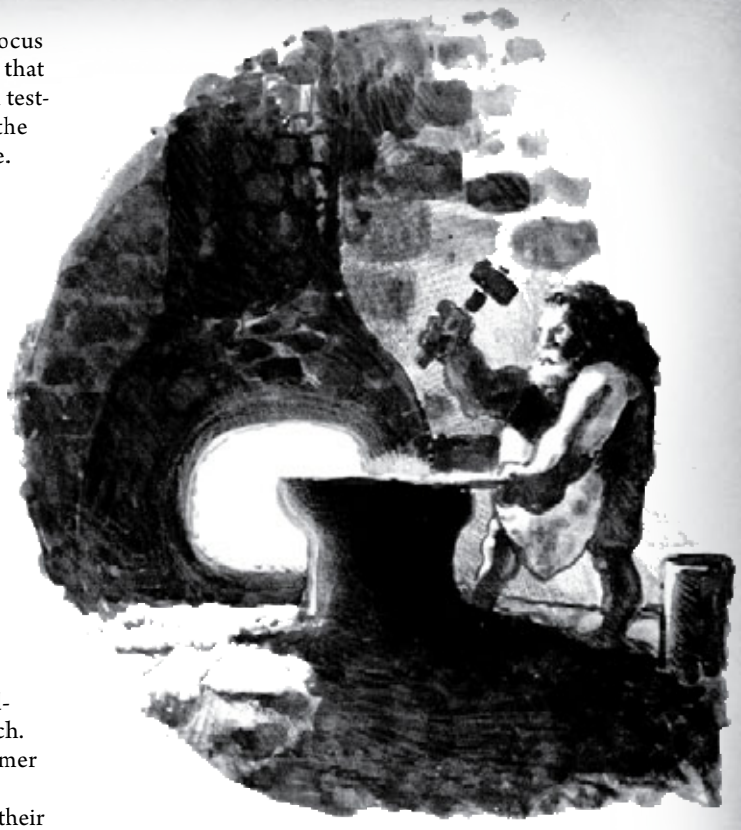
Advancing through the Circles of the Weaponsmith Discipline can be a grueling task, even for those with iron wills. Every time one of our Discipline wishes to advance to the next Circle, he must first travel to a Forge and prove that he is worthy. Those wishing to advance spend a week at the Forge, studying under the more experienced Weaponsmiths. At the end of their study, they go before the Forge elders and demonstrate at least three talents they know. If the candidate's proficiency satisfies the elders, they teach the Weaponsmith the secrets of the next Circle and send him back out into the world.

When an adept comes to a Forge seeking admittance to the Fifth Circle of our Discipline, the elders test the adept's mental acuity and grasp of history as much as his physical abilities and knowl-



edge of metalworking. Beginning with the Fifth Circle, the focus of testing shifts from the working of metal to the knowledge that must accompany that ability. For example, the elders begin testing the adept's knowledge of weapon history, often basing the test on one of the weapons each Forge keeps in its safe house. The Forge usually holds some knowledge of these weapons, having catalogued and documented a few of their pertinent facts through their own talents and the labor of various adepts testing for Fifth Circle, but all still keep some secrets. During advancement testing, Forge elders offer one such weapon to candidates and instruct them to study the weapon for a specific period—usually a week to a month, depending on the Circle the adept wishes to achieve and the complexity of the weapon being examined. At the end of the time allotted, the candidate must return to the elders and relate his findings. The elders then decide whether the candidate displays sufficient knowledge for advancement. Adepts attempting to attain the Ninth Circle of the Discipline must undertake a most daunting task. Each Forge keeps a list of weapons lost before or during the Scourge. The advancement candidate undergoes forty hours of training at the Forge and then sets out to rediscover one of these weapons. Often, the weapon is related to a weapon that the adept has studied before, providing the Weaponsmith a good idea of where to start his search. Once the adept finds the weapon, he must restore it to its former glory and present the weapon to the Forge elders.

Weaponsmiths rarely search out ghost masters to continue their training, for most of us feel uneasy seeking from the dead the knowledge those who have passed on gained during life. But in times of need, Weaponsmiths will summon ghost masters. Generally, the ritual of the ghost master is only available to adepts of Fifth Circle and higher, and then only to those in genuine need of such extreme measures. Those Weaponsmiths who may be traveling far from a Forge will often be taught the ritual as well, so that they may continue to advance in Circles despite their distance from their Forge. In all instances, ghost masters train adepts using the methods and trials of advancement of living Weaponsmith mentors.



The Weaponsmith Dermatt's confessed aversion to dealing with the dead stems from ignorance. Thank the Passions not all members of the Discipline suffer from such shortsightedness.

—D'elko, Nethermancer of Kratas

BEING A WEAPONSMITH

Few things in life provide more gratification than helping others. And helping others is one of the things that Weaponsmiths do best. No, we don't heal wounds or cure infection or ease the pain of child birth and death for our fellow Namegivers, but we do make their daily lives simpler and more comfortable by employing our talents. Oh, other Disciplines might claim that they do the same, but I can't say as they'd be telling the whole truth. When was the last time that the average man in a village needed the services of a Swordmaster or the spells of a mage? Not often I'd wager, but every time I go into a village I can be sure that someone is going to need a little of my time and help. It may be hard to explain to a young would-be Archer or Sky Raider, but sometimes digging in and helping out the common folk scrabbling to make a living on the surface of Barsaive can be infinitely more important than running off to kill Horrors. This desire to help our fellow Namegivers inspires many of our Discipline to wander far and wide. We go where we are needed, traveling from village to city to village again, always looking to bring our talents where they can do the most good.

Weaponsmiths have stood in front of barred city gates, staring down ork scorchers thinking to plunder the shops within. Weaponsmiths have traveled to isolated towns to destroy Horrors that nested among the helpless. And still other smiths have spent days riding just to fix a wheel of a wagon that provides one family's livelihood.

This is not to say that we Weaponsmiths spend all of our time pursuing opportunities to practice charity. We must earn a living, and so we do charge for our services when those that we help can afford to pay. And we love knowledge, so we spend some time looking for items of legend and digging around for secret writings that might shed light on the nature of our world.

So you can say that Weaponsmiths combine in perfect balance the common decency of the people of Barsaive and the iron determination that saved us from the Scourge. We're the backbone of the world, and we travel far and wide spreading our strength.

Dermatt's words ring true. If only more adepts were more concerned with aiding their fellow Namegivers than performing glorious deeds, our world would be a much better place.

—Stokila of Vivane

THE HEARTBLADE

Crafting a heartblade is arguably the single most important task any Weaponsmith ever sets for himself. The heartblade represents the fusion of a Weaponsmith with his Discipline, the culmination

of his learning. In the heartblade, the Weaponsmith creates a powerful pattern item of his own.

Weaponsmiths spend many, many years working on their heartblades, striving to make them as perfect as possible. A Weaponsmith may begin crafting his heartblade only when given permission to do so by his elders. This permission is only granted to those who perform exceptionally well in their advancement trials. As soon as an adept shows above-average skill during his testing to attain a new Circle, the elders choose an instructor to guide the Weaponsmith through the three weeks of training necessary to learn the basics of forging the heartblade. From then on, whenever the adept trains for successive advancements, he spends another three weeks learning more about forging the heartblade.

Creating a heartblade involves eight distinct phases. First, the Weaponsmith must craft the hilt, a lengthy process during which the adept must imagine how the blade will fit the grip and how all the pieces of the blade will work together. Next, the Weaponsmith embellishes the pommel, beginning by finding just the right item to install in the pommel. The item must represent the Weaponsmith and his art. Gems are a common choice, as are small iron ornaments the Weaponsmith crafts himself. The adept affixes the item to the end of the hilt and fashions the pommel around it.

In the third phase, the Weaponsmith creates the guard. The guard may be simple or ornate, though Weaponsmiths usually give their heartblades complex guards, with quillons curving out every which way from the hilt of the weapon. The fourth phase is finding the ore for the blade, which must come from within a lost kaer. Generally, Weaponsmiths take the material from ancient weapons.

Purifying the metal for the blade is the fifth phase. This time-consuming process is also the most crucial, for if the Weaponsmith fails during this phase, the heartblade is ruined and he must begin the process anew. For the sixth phase, the adept forges the blade. Most Weaponsmiths consider this phase the simplest in the creation process, as they have nearly achieved mastery of blade forging by the time they craft their heartblade.

In the seventh phase, the adept joins the blade to the hilt and performs any necessary re-balancing. During the eighth and final phase, the Weaponsmith sharpens the blade and adds any final decorations. Then he performs a blood magic ritual to tie the item's pattern to his own.

As soon as the heartblade is completed, the Weaponsmith achieves a deeper understanding of his art and himself. It is said that Weaponsmiths carrying heartblades are among the greatest adepts to walk the earth.

The Forge

Every major city of Barsaive contains at least one Forge, and all but the most minor or distant villages count Weaponsmiths among their number. Forges consist of no fewer than five Weaponsmiths, with two elders for every five members. Thus, a Forge of ten members would include six adepts and four elders. An elder must have reached at least the Eighth Circle of his Discipline and is responsible for training adepts, recruiting new apprentices and managing the daily operations of the Forge. Unlike most adepts, Weaponsmiths understand the business applications of their skills; most Forges make a profit from the talents of their members.

Forges generally try not to compete with each other, though in the larger cities with more than a single Forge, this can be a difficult task. To avoid fighting for patrons, Forges near other Forges specialize in the creation, repair and enhancement of specific weapon types or other items.

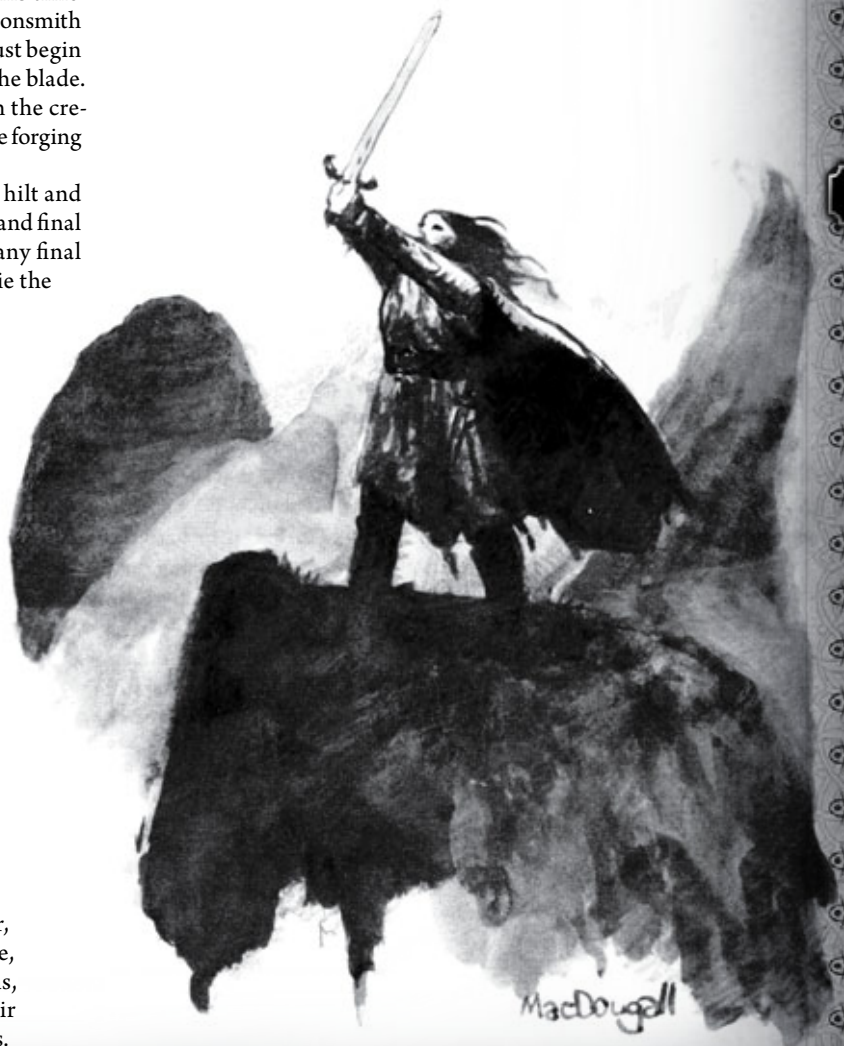
Any Weaponsmith can expect to receive free room and board at a Forge for as long as he chooses to stay, but is expected to work for at least a few hours each day to help offset the cost of his keep.

Weaponsmiths need not belong to a Forge, but most are members of the Forge where they served their apprenticeships. Joining a Forge has its benefits, most notably a 30 percent discount on any goods purchased from the Forge, but it also demands a price. Members are expected to deposit no less than 5 percent of their yearly earnings into the Forge's coffers. Though a Forge does not offer discounted training costs for members of the Forge, members do receive priority treatment and will receive training ahead of those who are not members of the Forge.

Weaponsmiths and Other Adepts

I'll not waste your time here. No prattling gossip or mudslinging about how all the other Disciplines are pale imitations of my own—I'm sure you've heard more than enough such drivel from the other adepts you've talked to. No, I get on all right with most other adepts.

Warriors are generally civil enough, though they sometimes seem a bit full of themselves, looking down their noses at us and such. At least until we start pointing out all the little flaws in their armor and fix them up a bit, or until a sword is broken. Then they show up all smiles and flowers and praise just flows out of their mouth like water from a spring.



Wizards, Elementalists, Illusionists and Nethermancers are a different bunch. They show some of the dedication of the Weaponsmith, but at the same time they're a bit in the clouds if you take my meaning. Lots of book learning, but most of them lack what I'd call "dirt under the nails." Oh, you'll find a few willing to get into the thick of things, but most spellslingers would just as soon stand at a distance and toss spells at the baddies, safely out of sword's reach. Not a bad way to handle things, really, but it lacks a personal touch. The Nethermancers are a pretty good lot, even if they've gotten a bit of a bad reputation from all the time they spend mucking about with dead things. In fact, the way I see it, one must be damned dedicated to be a Nethermancer, what with all the persecution they have to endure. And if there's one thing Weaponsmiths respect, it's determination.

Troubadours have a lot more in common with Weaponsmiths than they'd like to admit, as adepts of both Disciplines spend a lot of time carrying information from one place to another and telling stories to the people of Barsaive. Still, many differences separate us as well. Most Troubadours don't have our resolve, for one. Then again, who does?

I find Thieves a hard lot to stomach, sometimes. They don't share the Weaponsmith's sense of community, and they certainly don't respect good honest labor. No, they'd rather run around snatching goodies from everyone else and feeding off the work of others. Still, I've met some good ones, and more than once a Thief has saved my hide when I couldn't get around a trap or out of a fix. Quick hands, but no real strength—moral or physical. Keep the Thief where you can see him, and you should be fine.

So that's about it. Now maybe people will understand us a little better and we'll get the respect we deserve. Who knows, maybe in the next couple of years we'll even see a rise in the number of Weaponsmiths and a drop in the number of Swordmasters.

GAME INFORMATION

FORGING THE HEARTBLADE

A heartblade provides numerous advantages when complete, but requires several years of hard work to craft. Each of the eight distinct phases of creating the heartblade must be performed in its proper order, and the Weaponsmith may only perform two phases per Circle—forging the Heartblade takes four Circles, a whole Discipline Status Level. Adepts are usually given permission and instruction to forge the heartblade when becoming a Journeyman or Warden adept, so their efforts take place in either Circles 5 through 8, or Circles 9 through 12 respectively.

Every attempt at forging the heartblade takes one month of work, depending on the step of construction either working, researching, or designing the part of the blade in question—working on the blade does not necessarily mean pounding steel over an anvil. The adept needs to take time to think about each phase, make notes and sketches, and prepare test pieces, before he works on the weapon itself. At the end of this month the character makes a Half-magic Test. The Difficulty Number for this Test is 9 + the number of the step in construction the adept is at. For example, constructing the guard has a Difficulty Number of 12. If the test fails, the time spent and one attempt for this Circle is lost.

If the adept manages to complete all eight phases, he may perform a blood ritual to tie the blade's pattern to his own for all time. At this time, the Weaponsmith may add a +1 rank bonus to up to eight of his Discipline Talents. This bonus is permanent, but for each talent enhanced the adept takes 1 Permanent damage, which can never be healed. The rank bonuses gained do not count toward requirements for Circle Advancement.

Once the blood ritual is complete, the heartblade becomes a Core pattern item for the Weaponsmith, with all the advantages and disadvantages that entails. Note that the creation of a heartblade is an exception to the normal rule that pattern items cannot be artificially created by work or will. Weaponsmiths are incredibly careful with their heartblades, for if they fall into the wrong hands, they can serve as a channel for terrible magic directed at the adept.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the heartblade can be created as a masterpiece threaded item (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion*** for more information).

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

No matter what their individual idiosyncrasies, Weaponsmiths are committed to everything they do. From Steel Thought to Item History to Show Armor Flaw, a Weaponsmith's talents show his determination to accomplish the task he has set himself. Most Weaponsmiths do not understand failure; if a Weaponsmith says he will do something, he will do it however he can. If he cannot accomplish the task one way, he tries another, and another, and another until he succeeds. A Weaponsmith may request aid if he feels he needs it; he will do everything in his power to carry out his intentions.

"The word of a Weaponsmith" is proverbial in Barsaive, because a Weaponsmith's word is so rarely broken. Weaponsmiths often make their promises in Forges, and such promises are as important to the Weaponsmith as a blood oath would be to anyone else in Barsaive. Though a Weaponsmith suffers no loss of health and does not earn permanent Wounds should he break his simple promise, any Weaponsmith who betrays his promise risks being turned out of his Forge until he proves himself worthy.

DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS

A Weaponsmith may suffer a talent crisis if he violates the trust he feels the Discipline holds. For some, this may be as trivial as lying to an acquaintance or withholding information from a friend. A Weaponsmith may also suffer a talent crisis if he is rude to his elders, or those to whom he owes hospitality.

More common violations include intentionally destroying another's work, neglecting or improperly using a weapon, or taking unfair advantage of his position in a community. Weaponsmiths who place importance on knowledge may suffer a talent crisis if they fail to share information with members of their Forge.

Nearly all Weaponsmiths suffer a talent crisis if they break their sworn word, betray their Forge to enemies, or destroy a weapon of legendary quality or pre-Scourge importance.

RITUALS OF ADVANCEMENT

Most cities in Barsaive support a Forge, and sometimes two or three engage in competition for business and membership. Like guilds but less restricted, Forges give adepts a forum in which to exchange trade tips, find and take on apprentices, and gossip. The Forge is, in many ways, the center of Weaponsmith life, and nearly all Weaponsmith rituals involve the Forge in some way.

Recruitment: Weaponsmiths often teach their children their Discipline, but Forges provide standard channels for finding new apprentices.

Novice (2–4): The adept crafts or reworks a weapon and presents it to an elder or a panel of elders for inspection.

Journeyman (5–8): An elder or panel of elders presents to the adept several weapons of obscure origin. The adept may study the weapons for up to a week, then must identify for the panel the weapons' makers, histories, and other distinguishing features. This ritual of advancement may serve as the springboard for an adventure to investigate the clues revealed. Traditionally, the panel offers the adept the first opportunity to pursue the adventure.

Warden (9–12): The adept must find and take possession of a weapon lost before the Scourge, restore it to good condition, then display it to an assembled Forge.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Weaponsmith draws the usual circle, then mentally executes all the steps required to create the finest weapon ever made by the ghost master he wishes to summon. After one hour, the ghost master appears and corrects the adept's errors. The ritual continues as normal.

Discipline Combinations

The Weaponsmith Discipline blends well with the Warrior and the Archer; Warriors often share the Weaponsmith's practical and determined approach to the world, and Archers share the Weaponsmith's devotion to his art. Less common, but still workable, is the Weaponsmith/Nethermancer combination. Many Weaponsmiths admire the Nethermancer's determination in the face of persecution by those ignorant of his Discipline, and this admiration has sent more than one Weaponsmith in search of a Nethermancer master.

The powerful spells of the Wizard and Illusionist Disciplines may attract the Weaponsmith as ways to supplement his spell resistance. However, Weaponsmiths may learn many Elementalist talents at the higher Circles of their own Discipline, and therefore rarely choose to take on the Elementalist's way. Very few Weaponsmiths take up the Swordmaster or Thief Disciplines, as they dislike what they see as the Swordmaster's excessive showiness and the Thief's laziness.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Critical Hit, Disarm, Disarm Trap, Sense Magic Item, Show Armor Flaw, Spell Matrix, Spellcasting, Temperature

Ninth Circle

Elementalism: The adept's Thread Smithing Talent now doubles as the Elementalism Talent for all intents and purposes (allowing the adept to weave spell threads to Elementalist spells or learn Elementalism talent knacks). The adept has to learn other talents and abilities or find substitutes for them to be able to cast the full range of Elementalist spells, most notably the Spellcasting and Read/Write Magic Talents.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Infuse Weapon

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Strength-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Weapon Ward

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +1 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Infuse Armor

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Mind Blade

Master

Talent Options: Armored Matrix, First Ring of Perfection, Resist Pain, Shared Matrix, Soften Blade, Willforce

Thirteenth Circle

Craft Mastery: By performing a ritual and taking 3 Blood Magic Damage, the adept adds +4 steps to the Damage Step of a weapon or +2 to both the Physical and Mystic Armor Rating of a piece of armor he has crafted. If the item is lost or destroyed, the adept may heal the Damage after a year and a day have passed. The adept may apply Craft Mastery to additional items by taking 3 additional Blood Magic Damage during another ritual per item so enhanced, but cannot use Craft Mastery on the same item multiple times.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Ethereal Weapon

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Toughness-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Aura Armor

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Reshape Object

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE WAY OF MIND AND SYMBOL

In its original form, the following document was an address to the Throalic Court, delivered in 1504 TH by the ork Wizard Ajmar the Admirable as part of his application for the post of Court Spellcaster. For this anthology, I asked Ajmar to expand his presentation wherever he felt additional text would clarify his comments.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

The way of the Wizard is not only the most advanced of the spellcasting Disciplines, it is by far the most complex and subtle of all the Adept's Ways. The wise monarch seeking the counsel of a practitioner of the arcane arts should therefore listen first and longest to a walker of the Wizard's path. In order to master the Discipline of Wizardry, an adept must develop a superior intellect and acute powers of analysis. Clearly, these faculties also make a Wizard—such as my humble self—eminently suitable for the post of adviser. Indeed, a Wizard's mental acuity makes him a fit purveyor of advice on every topic imaginable. For it is the Wizard's task to understand all things in the world, to fit them into categories, and rank them in a system of correspondences. From these correspondences flow not only the magical powers on which the Wizard draws, but a complete vision of the Universe by which to comprehend people, creatures and objects of all sorts.

If I may beg the Court's indulgence, I shall now develop my argument to support what I have said, providing evidence to establish the truth of my claims.

ON SYMBOLS AND SPELLCASTING

The Wizard-in-training must first understand that things in this world are more than they seem. Every word, every action, everything that can be observed with the Namegiver's eye, these things all have higher meanings. The Wizard learns to perform wondrous supernatural acts by discerning these higher meanings. Acquiring this understanding is known among teachers and students of the Wizardly way as the process of symbolization.

Let us use as an example the chair you sit upon, Your Majesty. "Chair" seems utterly the wrong word for that object, even as the word leaves my lips. The word "chair" drops to the floor, flopping about like a fish out of water, refusing to enter your ears. That is because the proper word for the thing upon which you sit is "throne." A "throne" is no mere chair; it is a symbol. It represents kingship. Your throne is an example of an object that carries a Great Meaning. A chair means nothing; a throne means something. Likewise, Your Serene Majesty is also a symbol. The name "Varulus" does not refer merely to a dwarf. It refers to one who symbolizes kingship, and also symbolizes all dwarfs.

Symbols have power because they are connected to the Realm of Ideas, upon which I shall expound further in a moment. Because it is a symbol, Your Majesty's throne has more magical power than a mere chair. You have more magical power than an ordinary dwarf. The Wizard's art lies in tapping these powers; a Wizard gains power by learning to mystically manipulate these symbols. Any thing important enough to stand as a symbol holds power that can be reached and used by the talents and spells of the Wizard.

Unlike other Disciplines, whose adherents feel the tenets of their crafts in their bones, the Discipline of the Wizard requires the adept to clearly understand the principles of his way in his mind. He must be a thinker, with a brain as sharp and cutting as a knife. He must learn to separate truth from falsehood, importance from triviality. The mind is the most important gift given to we Namegivers by the Passions; the Wizard takes this extraordinarily valuable tool and uses it to its fullest. With his mind, he remakes the world.

Most Namegivers use a mere fraction of the mind's abilities. To become a Wizard, a student must awaken his sleeping intellect until it is afire with the stunning possibilities of thought, the limitless vistas of the imagination. For practitioners of the lesser Disciplines, the first moments of initiation may come in a sudden flash of mystical awareness. Our way is not so easy. Only the trained mind is prepared for the ultimate insights of the Wizardly path. The prospective Wizard must build a mental foundation for the profound perceptions to come. Achieving this requires extensive study. The Wizard therefore spends the early years of his life wrestling with dusty tome after dusty tome, immersing himself in the works of the great Wizards of Barsaive's past.

[Author's note: I used the word "tomes" here as a symbol for all transmitted learning. Many young Wizards, particularly in Barsaive's misbegotten hinterlands, are nowadays forced to learn the great works as part of an oral tradition. Books require the painstaking labor of large numbers of scribes. Because they are expensive

and time-consuming to produce, they are rare at the best of times. The Scourge has made them even harder to find, and so many small villages cannot lay hands on anything close to the entire corpus of texts necessary for the Wizard-in-training. To compensate for this dreadful lack, tutors of the Wizardly arts have taken to memorizing vast portions of the books missing from their own collections and then reciting them to their students. Though this way of teaching is unfortunately necessary, I fear that many subtle but essential points are lost by its practice. The hinterlands of Barsaive continue to produce large numbers of half-taught, bumpkin mages who learn by hearsay rather than by reading the eminent works of the past for themselves. While this kind of slow erosion is perhaps acceptable for Nethermancers, Elementalists and Illusionists, it is most regrettable that the noble tradition of the Wizard should be degraded in this manner.]

I shall not tire the Court with the complete list of these basic texts, particularly since Wizards often disagree as to which are truly essential. I would say a dozen plus one books are essential to the learning of the Wizard, including Thystrio's *Elucidations of Metaphor and Meaning*, Comborian's *Pathways to Profundity*, Clessio and Tornovir's *Categories of Ritual and Thinking*, and *The Substance of Desire* by the Countess of Nevermore.

On the Idea and Its Meaning

Though these profound manuscripts teach their lessons from different perspectives, all speak of the importance of the Idea. In order to understand how the Wizard remakes reality according to his desires, one must understand this concept. All things in this world are connected to an Idea. Your walking stick, Your Majesty, shares the Idea of the walking stick in common with all other walking sticks. Your throne shares the Idea of the throne with all the thrones of all the monarchs that have ever existed or will exist. But where do these Ideas come from? The Wizard knows that the Idea of the throne, the Idea of the walking stick, was not created by Namegivers. There is a place, a real place deep in the heart of astral space, a place that even the Horrors cannot reach, in which all Ideas exist. Were it possible to travel to this Realm of Ideas, one would find there The Walking Stick—the original, mystical emanation upon which all walking sticks in our own reality are modeled. Anything you can think of has such a model in the Realm of Ideas. If it did not, you would not be able to think of it. Whenever a new object or being is created in this world, that creation merely reflects events in the Realm of Ideas, which on occasion spontaneously generates new things. (I have chosen the term "thing" specifically for its vagueness; an Idea might be a type of being, an object, or even an abstract concept.) When the t'skrang race developed—with the Passion Upandal's aid—the peculiar engine that propels their riverboats, their actions reflected the appearance of a new thing called The Engine in the Realm of Ideas. If The Engine had not appeared there, the t'skrang would not have thought to try to make such objects here in this world. The Idea must exist first.

Are the Passions subservient to the Realm of Ideas? This question has puzzled Wizards for centuries. I conclude that the Passions are themselves Ideas, the exemplars of our primal emotions. They are special examples of—

[Author's Note: At this point in my discourse, it became evident that my untutored audience was no longer devoting their full attention to me. To attract their wandering gazes, I was forced to resort to a visually spectacular parlor trick. That particular and satisfying combination of spells will illustrate for the reader what may seem to be an abstract point.

His majesty's court jester, a prancing and drooling ork of the type that brings discredit to our race, had begun capering about the hall, distracting those I sought to address. Not unprepared for such an eventuality, I reached into one of my matrices and cast a Wall Walker spell on the idiot. He looked at me questioningly; no obvious effect had occurred. I then fired a Flame Flash at his feet. Startled and fearful, he did what I had hoped he would; he instinctively jumped for the wall, which he climbed with the bug-like scrabble of a long-legged spider. Further startled, he then pushed himself off of the wall he had climbed, landing on his generous posterior with a wail of protest.

I then extemporized in the following vein:]

What you have just seen, Your Majesty and notables of the Court, serves as a practical example of the manipulation of Ideas. In this instance, I used my intellect and the talents of spellcasting to draw upon the power of the Idea of the Spider. According to chapter

seven of Alloron's *Correspondence and Continuum*, one of the primary things the spider symbolizes is the act of climbing. I used magic to bring that manifestation of the Idea of the Spider into this world, loaning to our dear jester an essential characteristic of the spider.

Then I drew power from the Idea of the Flame, specifically the destruction it symbolizes. By weaving threads to it, I turned a symbol in my thoughts into physical reality, producing the jet of fiery matter that impelled our jester to participate in my humble demonstration.

This incident affords me an excellent opportunity to distinguish between the symbol and the Idea. The Idea is perfect, ultimate, untouchable. We cannot directly perceive an Idea, for we cannot travel to the Realm of Ideas. The best we can do is to think of an Idea. The thought that thereby appears in our minds is the symbol. The symbol is the connection between our lowly, imperfect selves, and the primacy of the Idea. The symbol is what the Idea means to us. In this case, the spider meant climbing to me, and therefore served as a symbol of climbing. Flame meant destruction for my purposes, and therefore became destruction's symbol. I cannot master the Idea, but I can use the symbol to borrow a fraction of its power. Through the symbol, I can conjure up the ability to climb, or foster destruction.

Such spells as I have just cast are but minor manifestations of the Wizard's capabilities. He conquers reality by understanding it, and then gives his desires form and solidity. It is our world he changes, not the Realm of Ideas.

Of course, I realize that the vaunted post of Court Spellcaster to the Royal Family of Throal is not to be won by the mere vulgar display of magical power. Incidentally, I shall be more than happy to repay the treasury for the cost of replacing that scorched tile.

I feel it necessary to remind the reader that the theory of the Realm of Ideas has, in the past, been subject to much conjecture. Many magicians, my fellow Wizards among them, have criticized the theory as nothing more than a simple way of explaining the nature of magic, which no one truly understands.

—Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane

Understanding Through Ideas and Symbols

[Author's Note: Having gained their attention once more, I returned to the matter of my prepared speech.]

The adviser you seek, Your Majesty, must be able to do more than cast simple spells. He must be able to look at a complex matter and divine from it its core elements. As a Wizard, my training prepares me eminently for such reasoning. Once the Wizard learns that any situation can be reduced to the connection between symbols and Ideas, he can look beyond the surface confusion to detect the order beneath.

The Wizard builds his perceptions on the wise words of his predecessors in the Discipline. He looks to history, to precedent. This is why a Wizard must never stop learning, must never tire in his quest to unearth the buried knowledge of the past. With the correct background knowledge and a solid grasp of the catalogue of symbols, the Wizard can look at any event or potential event and choose the correct course of—

[Author's Note: At this point, His Most Benevolent Highness interrupted me and asked me to address my powers of critical reflection to a particular practical matter. I dare not paraphrase my liege's most incisive words, but in short he demanded that I advise him on the status of Bartertown. He said that there was great debate among his chamberlains as to the fate of this scruffy urchin of a city, huddled impertinently outside the gates of his great kingdom. He said that he had already taken a decision on it, but wished me to express my views in order to determine if they were congruent with his. After several moments of intense rumination, this is what I said:]

Let us look at Bartertown, Your Highness, and divine which symbols and Ideas are involved in this matter. Only when we know these things can we make an informed decision.

First of all, Bartertown is a manifestation of the Idea of the City. What is a city? First of all, it is a coming together of Namegivers for a common purpose and a collective livelihood. Therefore, the City symbolizes Unity and Cooperation. These are positive symbols, I am sure you will agree. But not all cities are good places. Kratas, for example, combines the Idea of the City with the Idea of the Thief, and this latter Idea exerts a baleful influence over the first. Kratas is a gathering-together like any city, but for the purposes of conspiracy. If Kratas was on your doorstep, I would recommend that you attempt to extinguish it.

But Bartertown bears its second symbol in its name: barter. Bartertown is therefore connected to the Idea of Trade. What is trade? It is exchange, the free transfer of goods from one willing partner to the next. Trade is another form of cooperation, and thus Bartertown is doubly woven to the Idea of Cooperation.

This symbol augurs extremely well for your own aims, Your Majesty. For is not the Kingdom of Throal also a symbol of Unity and Cooperation? You seek to bring our province together, to unite it under the rule of justice and compassion. Bartertown may seem untidy and unruly; it may offend the sense of order that your dwarf heritage leads you to value; but in truth, Bartertown is a manifestation of the highest order. It can be a tool by which you may bind our land in your benevolent compact. Bartertown can aid you in this by adding to Unity and Cooperation a third and most vital Idea: Freedom.

Know this, Your Majesty: Unity without Freedom is the yoke of oppression. To avoid the tragic folly of the Therans who once ruled here, you must always take care that your decisions connect to the Idea of Freedom as well as to the Idea of Unity. Bartertown means freedom. It has sprouted unbidden from the soil of our new Barsaive, but it is a wildflower rather than a weed. To limit its growth is to doom your own noble vision—the very vision that brought me to this Court to offer you my service. As long as you are connected to the Ideas of Freedom, Cooperation, and Unity, I shall bind myself to you should you have me.

[Author's Note: At this point King Varulus announced that I might consider myself the official Court Spellcaster of Throal. His words seemed to take many of his courtiers by surprise; one of them began to choke and required the attention of the Court Healer. In the ensuing confusion, the rest of my discourse was forgotten. I present the remainder of it here, for the first time.]

On Correspondences and Antipathies

Few Wizards travel without at least an abridged copy of Vomon's *Concordance of Correspondences* or M'chuda's *Encyclopedia of Symbology*. These basic texts contain lists of the most commonly encountered Ideas and the symbols that relate to them. Most Wizards have committed many of these to

memory, but there are always moments when the ability to connect with an obscure Idea is a matter of life and death. My own well-thumbed copy of Vomon's text has helped me make decisions time after time that have saved not only my own life, but the lives of others.

The following tale will serve as an example of how Correspondences and Antipathies work in the world. Some years ago, I was trapped with my adventuring companions in a small village kaer in the lowlands south of Lake Vors. Moments after we entered the kaer, I saw that the Idea of the Kaer had been connected to another, very strange Idea. The kaer's walls were of worked and polished metal. The design of the place was maze-like. And when the last of our party had stepped inside the kaer, a mammoth door of stone slammed down behind us, blocking our exit. With no choice but to go further into this oddly altered place, we soon found ourselves in a trap sickening in its depravity.

First, another stone door sealed all of us in another, inner chamber of worked and polished metal. Then a trap door opened beneath our Beastmaster and sucked her out of sight with a hideous whooshing sound. We pounded furiously on the floor in an attempt to reopen the trap door and follow her. We had threaded ourselves together in a group pattern in order to symbolize our unity, and we had sworn never to allow our party to become separated. But this terrible trap-kaer set all our efforts at naught. We could not reopen the trap door, and our Beastmaster seemed lost to us.

As we pounded and shouted, one of the metal walls began to sink into the floor. Behind it was yet another wall, of a mysterious clear substance that I have yet to match to a governing Idea. Through that clear wall we could see our comrade, sitting in a daze in a chamber much like the one we were in. Seeing us, she rushed over to the wall. We hammered at it from both sides, to no avail. Clearly one of the symbols of the clear wall was Invulnerability.

Portions of the walls in the Beastmaster's room then shifted, revealing an array of spouts that gushed forth streams of water. The second chamber was a drowning trap, fiendishly made so that we could only look on helplessly as our comrade met a slow and awful death. Our Archer made a quick mathematical determination, and told us that it would take but three minutes for the chamber to fill entirely with water. After that, our Beastmaster had only as much life as she had lung power.

I immediately went to work, rifling through my sack for the notes I had taken some weeks earlier in the course of a rare opportunity to consult the dread book titled Horrors, a volume reluctantly compiled and jealously guarded by the librarians of the Great Library of Throal. Something about the nature of this place rang a faint bell in my memory. Lo and behold, I found—after much page-shuffling—my notes on an entry regarding the Great Horror named Artificer. Reading quickly, I learned that Artificer travels throughout Barsaive, searching out places likely to attract adventurers. It then remakes these places, filling them with deadly traps of devious construction. I knew that this trap-kaer was connected not only to the Idea of the Kaer, but to the Idea of the Horror, and through it to the Idea of the Machine.

I concentrated fully on my task, blocking out the horrified shrieks of my companions as the water rose higher and higher in the other chamber. I grabbed my copy of Vomon and riffled to the entry on the Idea of the Machine. Vomon lists symbols that relate to an Idea—called Correspondences—and also Ideas and Symbols that are the opposites of these Correspondences. The latter are called Antipathies.

One of the Antipathies for the Machine was the Idea of Air. The text explained that one of the symbols of Air is Rust, which is the enemy of Metal, and therefore of the Machine. Air, I thought frantically, Air! How can I connect to this symbol for Air?

By this time, the water had reached the top of the chamber. My companions were either weeping or screaming in despair. The Beastmaster had filled her lungs with air and was now gazing sadly at us, waiting for the inevitable moment when her lips would burst open and let the brine come rushing in.

I was already hard at work, reattuning my matrix to insert the spell I needed. With no time to spare as the moments slipped past, I wove the threads and cast a Compression Bubble spell around my dear companion. (Compression Bubble usually harms the target, but I knew that any damage to my durable colleague would be minor compared to drowning.) A large bubble of air appeared around her, allowing her to breathe.

My companions exulted, shouting in delight at this victory. And as their tears turned from sorrowful drops to joyous ones, the waters began to recede—as I knew they would.

The text on Artificer revealed that it derived its mystical power from the suffering caused by its traps. From this, I deduced that the traps themselves were triggered by negative emotions, such as trepidation and despair. My Compression Bubble spell bought our dying Beastmaster a momentary respite, which boosted my companions' flagging morale. Their sudden, intense joy canceled out the emotional energy powering the trap, thus saving our partner.

The rest of our escape from Artificer's kaer is a tale for another day. You can see from my story, though, how the Wizard solves

problems. First, he consults all of his texts at hand. Then he seeks Correspondences and Antipathies. Finally, he uses his powers of deduction to arrive at the correct conclusion, and takes the appropriate action.

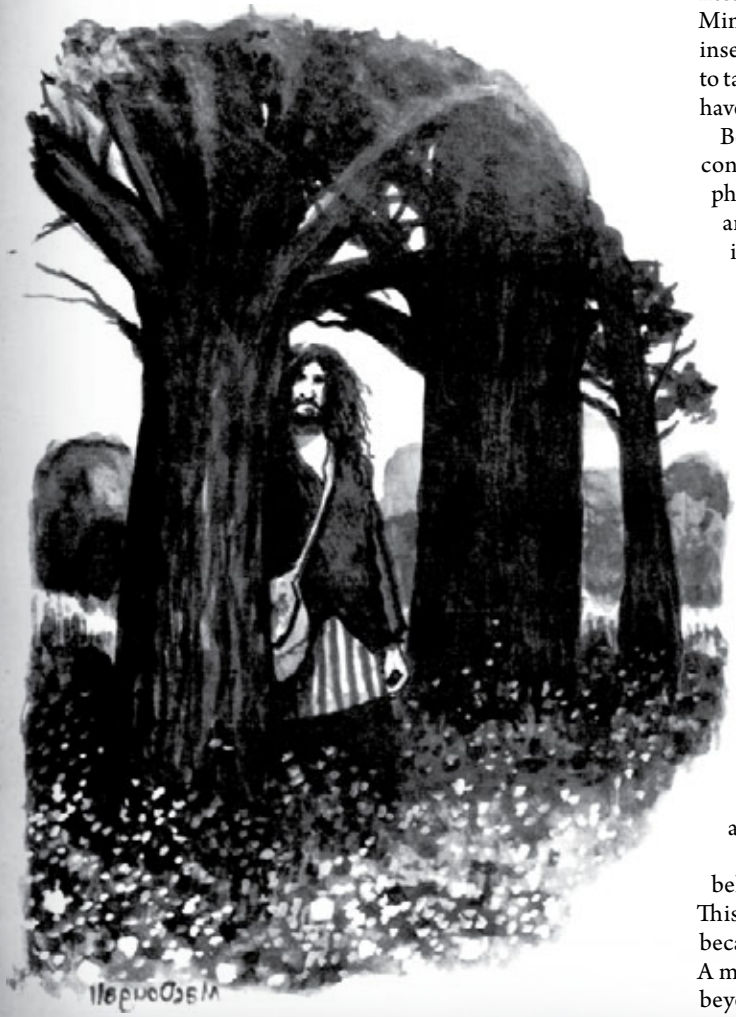
Like many of my kind, I also use these means for petty matters, such as deciding which type of rope to purchase or what kind of breakfast to order at a tavern. From the simple to the dramatic, symbols and Ideas govern every aspect of a Wizard's life.

On Branches from the Path

[Author's Note: The following is condensed from a longer closing address, which of course was made redundant by my liege's immediate acceptance of my application. Please excuse its sudden ending.]

I assure you that I follow the approved and accredited Wizard's way. In the wake of the Scourge, several new and questionable approaches to the Discipline have unfortunately arisen out of a deplorable drop in standards.

Of late, I have encountered many who claim to be so-called instinctive Wizards. These scruffy excuses for spellcasters would not be caught dead with a collection of books on hand. They learned their talents and spells by word of mouth, from other hedge Wizards. Though they carry in their heads badly jumbled memories of the system of Ideas and symbols, and a wholly inadequate list of Correspondences and Antipathies, they claim they can nonetheless achieve true mastery of the Wizard's Discipline through experience. They simply invent their own Correspondences and Antipathies based on the skimpy evidence of their own lives! It is a wonder to me that any of them survive past the First Circle, but somehow they do. These "instinctive" Wizards often display a frank and earthy sensibility that lacks in the dignity with which a Wizard should carry himself.



There are also those who follow the path of mastery, which in my view goes beyond dignity into a dangerous kind of pride. These Wizards see themselves as more than borrowers of the power of Ideas; they believe they can control and dominate emanations from the Realm of Ideas. They believe the world is theirs to manipulate as they will, and see Wizardry as no more than a route to power. Theran Wizards often choose this path; in the days before the Scourge, they planted this lamentable tradition in our own fair province, and it plagues us to this day. The Wizard who desires mastery holds himself above all persons and all things. He uses his overweening confidence to force symbols to do his will. This path is a hazardous one, for Ideas are more powerful than individuals. The so-called mastery Wizard should fear the day when Ideas will have the last laugh.

Game Information

Roleplaying Hints

Ajmar the Admirable, whose account of the Wizard's way is described in this chapter, exemplifies the aspect of the Wizard's Discipline known as the way of the mind. Players wishing to play such Wizards can emulate some of Ajmar's character traits: wordiness, pomposity and a tendency to quote inscrutable occult classics. Mind Wizards trust the written word over oral tradition, and feel insecure without a couple of books in their backpacks. They tend to take the concepts of Idea and symbol literally, and many of them have memorized large chunks of books central to that tradition.

Before making decisions, most mind Wizards will consult their concordances for references to the Ideas involved, and philosophize about their ultimate meanings. They generally value thought and reflection over all other things, and believe that the superior intellect always wins in the end. Though humble mind Wizards do exist, many of them believe their Discipline is superior to all others and act accordingly. Most mind Wizards are smart enough to underplay this belief in the presence of practitioners of other Disciplines, but they often have more trouble concealing their contempt for other types of Wizards.

Some Wizards, particularly those in the hinterlands, learn the Wizard Discipline based on the knowledge their master possesses, rather than from tomes and texts. Idea and symbol still tend to be a part of their way of thinking about magic, but they rely more on their own experiences than on the writings of others. These "instinctive" Wizards learn to work magic by deciding what each idea and symbol means to them personally. They tend to think and act with less arrogance than mind Wizards; many of them have a wry sense of humor and feel humbled in the face of the wonders of the world. They often speak with rustic accents and act with solid rural common sense. Proverbs and other bits of folk wisdom pepper their conversations. They can be quick to dismiss the benefits of book learning, or may display a reverse snobbery toward city folk.

Mastery Wizards resemble mind Wizards, except that they believe they can also dominate the world of Ideas and symbols. This type of Wizard is more suitable for gamemaster characters, because mastery Wizards make loathsome, yet enjoyable enemies. A mastery Wizard's attitude toward the world usually goes well beyond pride into sheer megalomania. They believe that with the right knowledge, they can control any situation. They see nearly

everyone they meet as either a potential follower or a potential enemy, and usually show equal contempt for both.

Discipline Violations

A mind Wizard may violate his Discipline if he does something blatantly stupid, or suffers some slight to his dignity. For some mind Wizards, any kind of extreme emotional response may provoke a talent crisis.

Instinctive Wizards rely more on personal experience, and may suffer a talent crisis in an unfamiliar situation, especially one where they cannot draw parallels to their traditionally rural roots, like a high society party or other big city event. Mastery Wizards most commonly suffer from a talent crisis when their plans go awry, or when they lose control of a situation.

Rituals of Advancement

Wizard rituals usually consist of brilliant displays of magical skill and ability, especially spellcasting, thread weaving, matrix construction, and spell design.

Recruitment: Wizards recruit new adepts privately. Wizards identify likely candidates, then try to fluster them by reciting a long passage in an obscure language and commanding the candidate to repeat it. Those candidates who succeed in repeating at least part of the passage may be asked to follow the Discipline.

Novice (2–4): The adept casts a spell of the new Circle in the presence of an elder.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept studies the work of a legendary Wizard, assesses the merits and drawbacks of the subject's style, discusses mysteries clouding the subject's past, and circulates her conclusions to interested Wizards and scholars. A particularly skillful analysis may reveal new clues best investigated by adventuring.

Warden (9–12): The adept researches and demonstrates for other Wizards a new spell of the new Circle, then defends her research methods against rigorous peer review.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Wizard spends the entire hour of summoning meticulously drawing the required summoning circle to the most exacting specifications, at the same time reciting a memorized litany. On completion of the circle, the ghost master appears and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Discipline Combinations

Many Wizards, particularly those of the mind or mastery paths, believe that their knowledge of Idea and symbol makes it easy for them to acquire any secondary Discipline they choose. In truth, Wizards often have the most difficult time acquiring a second Discipline—an initiate must set aside preconceptions and open his mind to a new way of seeing, and Wizards are often too stubbornly absorbed in their preconceptions to make the necessary breakthrough.

Wizards are most commonly drawn to other spellcasting Disciplines as a secondary choice, but their primary Discipline is actually a disadvantage. Wizards are notorious for holding other magical paths as inferior, and a Wizard is likely to have a difficult time convincing a master to train him—regardless of whether the individual Wizard shares that belief or not.

The Disciplines that best suit the average Wizard's temperament are the Archer, Troubadour, and Weaponsmith. The Archer's tendency to view everything as symbolic missiles and targets meshes well with the Wizard's way of looking for symbols everywhere. Troubadours and Weaponsmiths are both keepers of lore, an aspect that also blends well with the mind Wizard's intellectual bent.

Talents and Abilities

Warden

Talent Options: Armored Matrix, Armored Matrix, Armored Matrix, Astral Pocket, Matrix Strike, Power Mask, Safe Thought, Spirit Strike

Ninth Circle

Matrix Split: For 2 Strain, the adept can divide one of his spell matrices (Spell, Enhanced, or Armored Matrix) in two. A split matrix can hold two spells, rather than the normal one. The combined Circles of the spells cannot exceed the rank of the split matrix. Note that a split Enhanced or Armored Matrix cannot also hold threads—holding two spells in a matrix is complex enough. Each use of the Matrix Split ability lasts for 24 hours. A single matrix can only be split once, but the ability may be used on each of the adept's spell matrices. Once the duration ends the matrix returns to normal and is wiped clean of any spells it contained.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.
Discipline Talent: Range Pattern

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: True Sight

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Casting Pattern

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Wound Transfer

Master

Talent Options: Detect Falsehood, First Ring of Perfection, Multi-Tongue, Shared Matrix, Shared Matrix, Shared Matrix

Thirteenth Circle

Casting Triangle: For 4 Strain, the adept can create a Casting Triangle, spending 1 round conjuring a luminescent triangle around himself, each side no greater than 2 yards long. The triangle only affects the adept who created it, who gains a +5 bonus to his Spellcasting and Thread Weaving Tests while casting spells from within its confines. The Casting Triangle remains effective until the adept leaves it.
Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Karma: The adept adds +1 to his Karma step.
Discipline Talent: Effect Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Initiative: The adept adds +2 to his Initiative step.
Discipline Talent: Detect Influence

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and +1 to his Physical Defense.
Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.
Discipline Talent: Astral Web

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

TALENTS

Talents made me the adept I am today!

• Solakir, Human Air Sailor •

Talents are capabilities powered by an adept's ability to tap into astral space and draw magical energy into the physical world; how he uses those energies makes him unique in his Discipline and helps him live according to that Discipline. Though the talents an adept may learn are limited by his Discipline, how effectively and creatively he uses them is limited only by your imagination.

TALENT DESCRIPTIONS

The following talents are available to the Disciplines presented in this book and appear in the same format as those described on p. 57 in the **Talents** chapter of the ***Player's Guide***.

ANIMAL LEADERSHIP

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept befriends and leads a group of animals by making an Animal Leadership Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional animal. If successful, the target group accepts the adept as a member of the pack. On a Good Result, the animals treat the adept as their pack leader for Animal Leadership Rank hours. During this time, the animals obediently follow the adept's lead: they attack if he attacks, run if he runs, and so on. The adept cannot command the animals he leads to action—the talent does not give him the ability to communicate with them—he can only lead by example. On a Pathetic Result, the adept's attempt at "usurping" the leadership role goes poorly. The animals turn on the adept and attack him, attempting to drive him away. They will flee if things turn markedly bad for them (several animals are killed or injured or the adept's comrades join the fight, for example).

ANIMATE OBJECT

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept infuses an inanimate object with rudimentary life force and intellect and gives it limbs. He first weaves a thread to the object—only objects with True Patterns can be animated by this talent (***Player's Guide***, p.113)—then makes an Animate Object Test against the object's Spell Defense. If successful, the object is animated for Animate Object Rank days. By taking 2 Blood Magic Damage, the adept animates the object for a number of years and days equal to his Animate Object Rank. The adept may animate up to Animate Object Rank × 10 pounds. The adept can animate up to Animate Object Rank objects, so long as he does not exceed his Thread Weaving Rank in active threads.

Animated objects have Perception, Willpower, and Charisma Values equal to the adept's Animate Object Rank and have Dexterity, Strength, and Toughness Values equal to his Animate Object Rank × 3. They have a Movement Rate of 4 and a Physical Armor Rating determined by the gamemaster, based on the materials of which they are made (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 108). Other characteristics are derived from their Attribute Values, but an animated object does not have a Wound Threshold or Unconsciousness Rating. If an animated object has magical properties, such as a threaded weapon granting an Attack Test bonus or a shield granting Mystic Armor, the object receives these bonuses to its own characteristics. Animated objects follow their creators' commands.

ARMORED MATRIX

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The Armored Matrix talent provides magicians with an improved type of spell matrix, designed to better protect spells from astral attack. An Armored Matrix holds the pattern of a single spell and one pre-woven spell thread, in the same manner as an Enhanced Matrix (***Player's Guide***, p. 68). The matrix' Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent, p. 108. However, the Armored Matrix is better protected than other spell matrices—its Mystic Armor is equal to the magician's natural Mystic Armor plus his Armored Matrix Rank. Each Armored Matrix represents a separate talent with its own Rank and is improved independently.

ASTRAL POCKET

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1 (see text)

The adept creates a pocket in astral space in which to store items. He cannot have more than one pocket active at a time. The adept makes an Astral Pocket (6) Test. If successful, the Test Result determines the maximum weight of goods the newly created pocket can hold. The adept may store and retrieve items in and from the pocket, but takes 1 Strain when performing either

action. The pocket remains in existence for Astral Pocket Rank days or until discarded by the adept. An astral pocket may be visible to those who can see into astral space. The viewing character makes an appropriate Astral Sensing Test against the pocket owner's Spell Defense. On an Excellent Result, the character notices the pocket, which appears as a finely woven net of purple and silver. Once detected, an astral pocket can be attacked in the same manner as a normal Spell Matrix. If the pocket is destroyed, any items in the pocket are deposited into astral space. Unless the owner has some means of entering astral space to retrieve them, such as the Spirit Portal spell, they are lost.

Astral Web

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 3

The adept creates a sticky web to capture and hold creatures in the physical and astral planes by making an Astral Web (6) Test. If successful, a web is created, invisible in the physical world, for Test Result minutes. The web has a length and width up to Astral Web Rank hexes in any direction. A character caught by or attempting to cross the web makes a Dexterity Test against the adept's Astral Web Step. If failed, he is stuck to the web and considered Knocked Down. Each round, a trapped character may make a Strength Test against the adept's Astral Web Step to free himself. If successful, he is free to move. Alternatively, a number of Damage Points inflicted on the web equal to the Astral Web Step is sufficient to free one character. Characters trapped in the web must be freed individually.

Aura Armor

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The adept magically enhances his natural armor by adding his Aura Armor Rank to his natural Physical and Mystic Armor for Aura Armor Test rounds.

Bardic Voice

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept uses his rich voice and persuasive magic to charm others by making a Bardic Voice Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, he impresses the targets enough that they listen with interest to what he says—they will not follow him, but will probably cooperate with his suggestions, as long as they aren't dangerous. On a Good Result, the adept completely charms the group and may command it for Bardic Voice Rank minutes. The adept cannot issue commands that would engender greater risk than he is genuinely willing to take. For example, the adept could not command the group to attack a Theran slaver camp unless he personally intended to participate in the raid.

Bargain With Summoned Creature

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept strikes a deal with a creature or entity he has summoned by making a Bargain With Summoned Creature Test against the creature's Social Defense. The Result Level required for success depends on the bargain being offered. If the deal is deemed fair (from the creature's point of view) an Average or Good Result

seals the bargain. If the creature believes the deal is disadvantageous, the adept needs an Excellent Result. Because this talent does not constrain the character to the terms of the bargain, many summoned creatures insist that the adept seals his part in the agreement with Blood Magic before they will perform any actions in his service. Without using Blood Magic to seal the bargain, the maximum duration of any bargain struck with the adept can be no more than Bargain With Summoned Creature Rank hours, after which time the summoned creature is free to do what it wishes.

Bestial Resilience

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** NA
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept recovers from damage faster than normal, using his Bestial Resilience Step in place of his Toughness Step when making a Recovery Test.

Bestial Toughness

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept resists taking major damage by adding his Bestial Toughness Rank to his Wound Threshold for Bestial Toughness Test rounds. An adept with one or more Wounds (excluding Blood Wounds) cannot use this talent until fully healed.

Blind Fire

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept senses a previously seen, but now unseen, opponent by making a Blind Fire Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he senses the target's location and may make ranged combat Attack Tests against the target as if it were visible to the adept for Blind Fire Rank rounds. Use of this talent negates Darkness modifiers (***Player's Guide***, p.226), though the target still benefits from Cover (***Player's Guide***, p.226) if the adept's weapon's

path must pass through it. Blind Fire is very effective when used in combination with the Bank Shot or True Shot talents.

Blood Guilt Weapon

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept tests a suspect's innocence by placing a few drops of blood from a crime victim onto his weapon. The blood flares into points of flame, red at first, then changing to white, but produces no heat and dies away after one round. During this time, the adept first accuses, then attacks the suspect, making a Blood Guilt Weapon Test as his Attack Test against the suspect's Spell Defense. If successful, and the suspect is guilty as accused, the attack hits and the adept makes a Damage Test, as normal. If failed, or the suspect is innocent, the attack does not strike home—an arrow shot at the suspect veers away at the last instant, a sword comes to a sudden halt a fraction of an inch from the suspect's neck, and so on.

Body Blade

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept temporarily transforms one of his limbs into a weapon, increasing his unarmed damage. His Body Blade Rank determines the type of weapon into which the limb transforms. At Rank 1, the side of one hand hardens to a knife edge; at Rank 2, fingers stretch into dagger blades; at Rank 5, an entire forearm elongates into a gleaming broadsword or a t'skrang's tail suddenly ends in a spiked mace-head; at Rank 8 or higher, the weapon sparks or glows with magical power. The transformation lasts for one round, during which time the adept uses his Body Blade Step for all unarmed Damage Tests made with the appendage.

Bone Compass

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 2

The adept uses a small piece of bone to connect with astral space to find a True Pattern (of a person, animal, spirit, object, or even a place) that he has previously examined by Astral Sensing. The adept makes a Bone Compass Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the piece of bone floats above his palm, pointing to the target if it is within Bone Compass Rank miles. If the target is out of range, the bone sits still. If failed, the bone shatters. The closer the adept is to the target, the closer the bone floats to the center of the adept's palm. The higher the target is, the higher the bone floats above the adept's palm. The bone floats for Bone Compass Rank hours or until the adept closes his fist.

Call Mount

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept magically calls his mount from up to Call Mount Rank × 100 yards (Rank × 50 hexes) away by making a Call Mount Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If successful, the mount senses the call and attempts to make its way to the adept at its fastest Movement Rate.

Casting Pattern

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The magician manipulates a spell pattern to improve a subsequent Spellcasting Test result. Before weaving any spell threads, he makes a Casting Pattern Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty (or Reattuning Difficulty, if the spell has no threads). If successful, the magician adds his Casting Pattern Rank to his Spellcasting Test for that spell.

Chameleon

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept blends into his surroundings, making him very difficult to see. His Chameleon Test determines the Detection Difficulty for Perception Tests made to see the adept for Chameleon Rank minutes. The adept must move slowly to maintain the blending effect. If he engages in combat or uses the Running combat option, the camouflage is temporarily disrupted—though his features are still blurry and indistinct, he can be seen normally until the end of the round.

Champion Challenge

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept calls a formal challenge to the leader of an opposing group, urging him to let single combat decide an impending battle by making a Champion Challenge Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the leader may choose to ignore the

challenge. If he does, both he and his men become demoralized and are Harried for Champion Challenge Rank hours—this penalty also affects their Social Defense. On a Good Result, the opposing leader feels honor-bound to acknowledge the challenge. Though both sides may negotiate terms, the end result is the same: the enemy leader accepts the challenge or his men stand down. If the challenge is accepted, the leader or his chosen champion faces the adept in single combat. If the adept is victorious, the opposing group yields. If the leader (or his champion) wins, the adept's side yields. Anyone attempting to interfere with the duel or initiating hostilities once the challenge has been resolved suffers an automatic Blood Wound, as though he had broken a Blood Peace Oath (see **Blood Oaths**, p.124 of the ***Player's Guide***).

CONFRONT HORROR

Step: Rank+CHA (see text) **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 5

There are more stories about people using this legendary talent than actual documented cases. The adept confronts a Horror in the hope of banishing it by making a Confront Horror Test against the Horror's Social Defense, receiving a +10 bonus if he is not marked by the target Horror. If successful, both Horror and adept are locked in a contest that lasts until one of them wins. Other characters may act normally during the contest, but should anyone harm the Horror the adept loses the contest (unfortunately, harm done to the adept does not result in the Horror forfeiting). During the contest, both Horror and adept may only use talents and abilities that oppose Social Defense, dominate their target, or resist such actions. Examples include the Terror and Thought Worm Horror powers, the Bardic Voice talent, and a Contest of Wills (***Player's Guide***, p.212). The first contestant to win three rounds wins the contest. If the adept wins, he may command the Horror to leave this plane by making another Confront Horror Test against the Horror's Social Defense. If successful, the Horror is compelled to leave and cannot return while the adept lives, unless given permission to do so. If the Horror wins the contest, the adept can never use this talent against it again.

CRITICAL HIT

Step: Rank **Action:** Free
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept targets an opponent's vulnerable areas, increasing the damage inflicted by adding his Critical Hit Rank to the Damage Test of a successful close combat or ranged Attack Test that achieves an Excellent Result.

DEFENSE

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept improves his ability to avoid physical attacks by adding his Defense Rank to his Physical Defense for Defense Test rounds.

DETECT FALSEHOOD

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept uses this magical form of insight to determine if someone is lying by making a Detect Falsehood Test against the target's Social Defense. On an Average Result, he knows the target is lying to some degree. On a Good Result, the adept knows

what sort of lie is being told: an Exaggeration, a Half-Truth, or a complete Fabrication (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p.95). On an Excellent Result, the adept knows precisely which part of the statement is untrue.

DETECT INFLUENCE

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept determines if someone is under the influence of a Horror by making a Detect Influence Test against the target's Social Defense. An Average Result is sufficient to reveal if the target is contaminated by some form of Horror taint. Unfortunately, this information isn't reliable, since such taint is common to any adventurer who has recently fought a Horror. A Good Result reveals whether the target is currently possessed by or actively under the influence of, a Horror. An Excellent Result reveals whether the target has made a voluntary pact with a Horror and also if he is Horror-marked by (but not under the active influence of) a Horror. An Extraordinary Result reveals the type and identity of the Horror.

DEVELOP ANIMAL SENSE

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept permanently develops the use of an animal's physical senses by spending a day with the creature, then making a Develop Animal Sense Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If successful, he acquires the new sense, with all the benefits and limitations thereof. The gamemaster has the final word on the specific effects of a given sense. Generally, the adept gains a new sensory ability: a bat's sonar, a snake's ability to smell by "tasting" the air, or a cat's night vision are a few examples. In other situations, the new sense improves one of his existing senses: the sharp vision of an eagle, or the keen hearing or smell of a dog, for example. At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may gain a +1 to +3 bonus to Perception Tests he makes with the improved sense. The adept can learn up to Develop Animal Sense Rank senses.

Dominate Arrow

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept controls the flight of a missile or thrown weapon fired by another. He must have a higher Initiative Test than the character making the attack and must be able to see the missile or weapon during its flight. The adept makes a Dominate Arrow Test against the firing character's ranged Attack Test. If successful, he takes control of the missile or weapon, directing it away from the intended target or toward a new target (including the firing character) within weapon range, using his Dominate Arrow Test as his ranged Attack Test against the target's Physical Defense. The Result Level required to hit or inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit on the target is increased by one level. If successful, the firing character, not the adept, makes a Damage Test, applying Range modifiers if appropriate (***Player's Guide***, p.231).

Eagle Eye

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept aims at a distant opponent, increasing his chances of hitting by making an Eagle Eye Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is considered to be at Short Range to the adept for Eagle Eye Rank rounds or until he makes a ranged Attack Test. Range modifiers are applied to the Damage Test (***Player's Guide***, p.231), but the weapon's Range is not increased by this talent.

Earth Armor

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept wraps himself in the protective power of living earth for one hour. The Result Level required to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit on the adept increases by one level (from Excellent to Extraordinary, for example). The armor has a Death Rating equal to the adept's Earth Armor Test and a Physical Armor Rating equal to his Earth Armor Rank. The earth armor's Physical Armor reduces damage taken, with any remaining Damage Points being applied to the armor. The armor disappears when its Current Damage equals its Death Rating—excess damage is passed on to the adept. The adept may repair damaged earth armor by making an Earth Armor Test and reducing the armor's Current Damage by the Test Result.

Echo Location

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept locates objects and characters by bouncing sound off them, avoiding Darkness penalties (***Player's Guide***, p. 226) when detecting and interacting with the targets. The adept compares his Echo Location Test against the Spell Defense of each solid object or character within Echo Location Rank × 10 yards (Rank × 5 hexes). If successful, he detects and tracks the position of the object or character for Echo Location Rank rounds.

Effect Pattern

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The magician improves the effectiveness of a spell he is about to cast by making an Effect Pattern Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty (or Reattuning Difficulty, if the spell has no threads) before making his Spellcasting Test. If successful, the magician adds his Effect Pattern Rank to the spell's Effect Test.

Elemental Walk

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 2

The adept resists the effects of exposure to a single element for a short time—taking a swim in Death's Sea or surviving on an elemental plane for a few minutes, for example. Like an elemental spirit, he can exist within a single element and be sustained by it. The adept becomes immune to the (potentially damaging) effects of the designated element for Elemental Walk Test minutes. For example, an adept who is underwater would not drown as he can breathe the air contained in the water, an adept in the air would be able to breathe anything, including poisonous fumes or smoke, and so on. Elemental Walk provides immunity to the Engulf spirit power (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 214) and many other abilities and spells based solely on one type of element. This talent does not increase the adept's physical abilities—for example, while he is protected from the damage delivered by a rockfall or an avalanche, he cannot dig his way out unless he is physically strong enough. The adept may extend the duration with consecutive Elemental Walk Tests. When the talent ends, he risks exposure to the element. The adept gains protection from only one element at a time. For more information on the elemental planes, see the **Astral Space** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Companion***.

Endure Cold

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Free
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept withstands the extremes of temperature caused by intense cold. Each time he takes freezing or cold damage his Endure Cold Test is subtracted from any Damage Points taken after armor, and before determining the effects of Wounds, unconsciousness, or death. The adept can use this talent Rank times per day.

Enduring Art

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept permanently paints, tattoos, or ritually scars another (or himself) with a symbol that acts like a Blood Charm. Before work begins, an Attribute and associated symbol are chosen. Creating the art takes one day, during which time neither adept nor target can engage in other strenuous activity. The adept familiarizes himself with the target, instinctively finding connections to his True Pattern while looking where to place the art, then makes an Enduring Art Test against the target's natural Spell Defense. If failed, he cannot find a suitable spot for the art and cannot try again for one week. If successful, he can create the art, which usually takes several hours to complete. The target takes 2 Permanent Damage and receives a permanent symbol or mark that works like a Blood Charm, but can never be removed. The target can activate the art after one day, after which he may take 1 Strain to gain a +1 bonus to a Test based on the chosen Attribute. The symbol chosen may be of any nature, but must be somehow related to the chosen Attribute. For example, tattooing a bear may warrant a Strength bonus, scarring the Throalic rune for Endurance might warrant a Toughness bonus, scribing the most famous line from an elven ballad about the joy of art might warrant a Charisma bonus, and so on. If no Artisan skill is used to create the art, it usually looks crude.

Escape Divination

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

An imprisoned or trapped adept determines the best exit from his current confinement. He meditates uninterrupted for half an hour, after which he receives a mental impression of the escape route. The adept makes an Escape Divination Test against the highest Spell Defense of whoever imprisoned him. An Average Result provides only a murky bit of information; a Good Result provides an obscure clue; an Excellent Result provides a helpful clue; an Extraordinary Result offers complete and clear information for a trouble-free escape.

Ethereal Weapon

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The adept's weapon turns incorporeal, glowing with a turbulent red, green, or blue haze, and passes through physical obstacles, including armor, turning solid as soon as it strikes a living opponent with a physical presence. The adept makes an Ethereal Weapon Test as his close or ranged combat Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, his Damage Test ignores the target's Physical Armor—Mystic Armor provides protection instead. When used with missile weapons, only the missile turns ethereal.

First Ring of Perfection

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept increases the effectiveness of his abilities. While performing actions leading to the use of an ability that requires a Sustained Action—working on a weapon before making a Forge Weapon Test, watching the sky before making a Navigation Test, talking to the target before making a Seduction Test, and so on—the adept makes a First Ring of Perfection Test against his own natural Spell Defense. If successful, he adds his First Ring of Perfection Rank to the Action Test for the Sustained Action.

Gain Surprise

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept uses a combination of stealth, illusion, and mind magic to surprise an opponent by making a Gain Surprise Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he gains the advantage of Surprise (***Player's Guide***, p.228)—the target's knowledge of his presence is magically suppressed until the end of the next round or until the adept acts against the target. Others can still see the adept as easily as before. Characters acting before the adept can warn the target, ruining the surprise. This talent can be used to recreate or "reset" the condition of Surprise required to use other talents, such as Surprise Strike.

Gold Sense

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept senses the presence of precious metals or minerals—but not magical substances, such as orichalcum or True Elements—by making a Gold Sense (6) Test. If successful, he learns the approximate direction in which the largest deposit of valuable substances is located, within Gold Sense Rank × 100 yards (Rank × 50 hexes). The adept may exclude valuable substances known to him (such as those carried on his person or by his companions), which is often necessary to find more than one deposit within a given radius. He may also exclude types of substances (such as gold or diamonds) from detection. This talent is not limited to natural deposits of metals or minerals.

Howl

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept makes one or more characters or creatures flee by imitating the aggressive sounds of a creature he has personally trained. The adept makes a Howl Test against the highest Social Defense in the target group, +1 per additional character or creature. An Average Result paralyzes the targets with fear; a Good Result forces the targets to flee away from the adept as fast as possible on their next turn. They will not come near the adept again until they cease to fear him. The talent effect lasts for Howl Rank rounds. Each round, a target may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Howl Step. If successful, the target overcomes his fear.

Impossible Hide

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept uses illusion magic to hide behind or under objects much smaller than himself, as long as the object is larger than an inch high or wide; for example, a rock, a stick, a large cockroach, or the hand of a cooperative Namegiver. The adept's Impossible Hide Test determines the Detection Difficulty for Perception Tests made by those looking for him or scanning the area in which he is hidden. With failed Perception Tests, searchers simply pass by

the adept unless they actually lift up the object behind which he is hiding. If someone finds the hidden adept this way, he seems to shoot out from behind the object, startling the searcher and surprising him (***Player's Guide***, p. 228). The effect lasts for Impossible Hide Rank minutes; the adept may spend another Karma Point to maintain the effect. The talent always ends when the adept is discovered or comes out of hiding.

Impressive Strike

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept impresses onlookers with a display of close combat prowess. He chooses a target and declares where the attack will strike, then makes an Impressive Strike Test as his close combat Attack Test. If successful, the adept hits the target in the designated area. Witnesses to this display of prowess may be impressed. The adept compares the Test Result against the Social Defense of each character witnessing the attack. If successful, he adds a +1 bonus for each Result Level achieved to all Interaction Tests made against affected characters for Impressive Strike Rank rounds.

Incite Mob

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept motivates a group of sentient beings to act against a character by spending at least one minute shouting and yelling, encouraging them into action. The adept outlines a grievance against the target and proposes an action—peaceful or violent, constructive or destructive—for the mob to take, then makes an Incite Mob Test against the highest Social Defense among the group. The group's size determines the Result Level required to motivate it, as given in the Incite Mob Table. If successful, the mob follows the adept's proposed course of action for Incite Mob Rank hours. On a Pathetic Result, the adept himself becomes the target of the grievance and action he proposed to the mob. Once motivated and sent into action, a mob becomes largely uncontrollable. The adept can only regain control by somehow gaining the mob's attention long enough to make a second, more successful, Incite Mob Test.

INCITE MOB TABLE

Group Size	Result Level
Talent Rank × 10	Average
Talent Rank × 25	Good
Talent Rank × 50	Excellent
Talent Rank × 100	Extraordinary

Incite Stampede

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept makes a group of animals stampede by spending at least one minute running and screaming in and around the animals, then making an Incite Stampede Test against the highest Social Defense among the herd. The number of animals in the group determines the Result Level required to start a stampede, as given in the Incite Mob Table, above. If successful, the animals stampede uncontrollably in a direction chosen by the adept, continuing to rampage for Incite Stampede Rank hours, until they are exhausted, or until they encounter a great enough danger or obstacle to stop them. On a Pathetic Result, the animals stampede in a random direction, determined by the gamemaster. A second, more successful, Incite Stampede Test can stop a stampeding herd, although the practical problem of running around and screaming loud enough to be heard by the animals limits this use.

Infuse Armor

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 2

The adept temporarily increases the Armor Rating of a set of armor or a shield (but not natural armor as found with, for example, creatures or obsidiman) by channeling magical energy through it. The adept touches the armor or shield and makes an Infuse Armor Test against the higher of the armor's or shield's Spell Defense or its current Physical+Mystic Armor Rating+5. If successful, he adds +1 to the item's Physical and Mystic Armor Ratings for each Result Level achieved, for Infuse Armor Rank hours. A set of armor or shield can only benefit from one use of this talent at a time. A Rule of One result (***Player's Guide***, p. 15) on the Infuse Armor Test destroys non-magical armor or shields. The talent can be used to enhance armor already enhanced by other magic, such as the Forge Armor talent, or being thread items.

Infuse Blade

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 2

The adept temporarily increases the Damage Step of a melee weapon by channeling magical energy through it. It otherwise works as described for the Infuse Weapon talent, below.

Infuse Weapon

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept temporarily increases the Damage Step of a weapon (but not body parts used as weapons or ammunition for missile weapons) by channeling magical energy through it. He touches the weapon and makes an Infuse Weapon Test against the higher of the weapon's Spell Defense or its current Damage Step+5. If successful, he adds +1 to the weapon's Damage Step for each Result Level achieved, for Infuse Weapon Rank hours. A weapon can only benefit from one use of this talent at a time. A Rule of One result (***Player's Guide***, p. 15) on the Infuse Weapon Test destroys non-magical weapons. The talent can be used to enhance weapons already enhanced by other magic, such as the Forge Weapon talent or from being thread items.

Lion Spirit

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept's defense against fear and intimidation is increased by adding his Lion Spirit Rank to his Spell and Social Defense against such effects.

Matrix Strike

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept is able to attack an opponent's spell matrices by making a Thread Weaving Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, one of the target's spell matrices has been struck and the adept's Matrix Strike Test determines how much damage is caused to the matrix (the matrix' Mystic Armor provides protection). Any of the target's spell matrices can be attacked by this talent, including Spell, Enhanced, Armored, or Shared matrices, and matrix objects. Unless the adept can see astrally, and thus target a specific matrix, the matrix struck is determined randomly. See the ***Player's Guide*** for information on spell matrices and how they are damaged and repaired.

MEMORIZE IMAGE

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept stores images of a person or event in his mind, allowing them to be recalled later to form the central image for an illusion, by making a Memorize Image Test and noting down the type of image and the Test Result associated with it. The image can afterwards be used in Illusionism spells with a Learning Difficulty (***Player's Guide***, p. 131) no greater than the image's Test Result and with a maximum Spell Circle equal to the adept's Memorize Image Rank. The realism of illusions created from such images is greatly enhanced. The adept adds his Memorize Image Rank to the Disbelief Difficulty of any illusions based on a memorized image. The maximum number of images that an adept may have memorized at any time is equal to his Memorize Image Rank. Memorized images can be forgotten, but only with some effort. The adept may forget a previously memorized image by making a successful Memorize Image Test against his own natural Spell Defense.

Enyiat, a human Illusionist, sees a spectacular river of fire near Death's Sea and decides to memorize the image. He makes a Memorize Image Test with a result of 15. Enyiat's player notes down a brief description of the image, then compares the Test Result against the Learning Difficulty of spells listed on the Spell Difficulty Table). He sees that Enyiat has memorized the image well enough to use it as the basis for illusions of Fourth Circle or less. However, Enyiat only knows Memorize Image at Rank 3, so he can only use this image for First to Third Circle spells.

METAL WARD

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept reduces the damage he takes from attacks utilizing any form of metal, including most weapons, the spikes in pit traps, and so on. The adept makes a Metal Ward Test against the higher of his own or his armor's Spell Defense. If successful, he adds his Metal Ward Rank to his Physical Armor for Metal Ward Test rounds.

MIND ARMOR

Step: Rank **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept fashions a suit of armor from sheer will at a moment's notice. The armor appears as shimmering air around the adept, and has a Physical Armor Rating equal to his Mind Armor Rank. Mind armor fits together in such a way as to allow the adept to move, similar to real armor. A skillful opponent can penetrate mind armor with an Armor-Defeating Hit as if it were real armor. Mind Armor provides no Mystic Armor protection, but has no Initiative Penalty either. If other armor is worn, only the higher of any Armor Rating applies. Each use of this talent lasts for Mind Armor Rank minutes, but the adept may dispel it before that time elapses.

MIND BLADE

Step: Rank **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept creates a melee weapon from sheer will at a moment's notice. The weapon appears as a distortion of the air, shaped like a melee weapon of the adept's choice, with a Damage Step equal to his Mind Blade Rank. The adept uses the blade in melee combat as normal. No Strength minimum applies for using a mind blade. The weapon lasts for Mind Blade Rank minutes, but may be dispelled by the adept before that time elapses. Mind blades may be broken using magical abilities like the Weapon Breaker talent, and the wielder may be disarmed as with a normal melee weapon. A mind blade that is broken or leaves the adept's hand is automatically dispelled.

MIND WAVE

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept confuses and confounds a character to whom he is standing adjacent. He must remain within 2 yards (1 hex) of the target or the effect ends. The adept makes a Mind Wave Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, all conscious thoughts are washed away from the target's mind and he completely loses his train of thought—the talent's magic imparts a vaguely pleasant sensation—and is considered Harried for Mind Wave Rank rounds. This condition also affects the target's Social Defense. While in this confused state, the target will not initiate any Actions, except to defend himself if attacked. The adept cannot communicate with others during the talent's duration; it requires his complete concentration and a Standard Action each round to maintain the effect. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Mind Wave Step. If successful, he shakes off the euphoria and regains his mental faculties, thus ending the talent.

MISSILE TWISTER

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept is enveloped by a funnel of air that flings arrows and other missiles away from him in every direction for Missile Twister Test rounds. During this time, the adept adds his Missile Twister Rank to his Physical Defense against ranged combat attacks directed at him. The twister is especially effective against lighter projectiles, such as blowpipe darts, arrows, and bolts. Only extremely accurate missile fire finds its mark—increase the Result Level needed to hit the adept with missile weapons by one level; in most cases, the adept will only be hit on a Good Result (and Armor-Defeating Hits will require an Extraordinary Result) on a missile Attack Test against his modified Physical Defense. The Result Level required for thrown attacks or with heavier missile weapons is modified at the gamemaster's discretion, depending on the weapon.

MOVING EARTH

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept animates a section of earth, creating a carpet on which he and other passengers can ride for Moving Earth Test hours. The section is no more than 4 yards by 4 yards in size and 1 yard thick and has a Movement Rate of 6. It has a Carrying Capacity equal to the adept's Moving Earth Rank × 200 pounds. When traveling, the moving earth acts as a living shield between its riders and any attackers. The adept adds his Moving Earth Rank to the Mystic Armor of anyone riding on the earth section and all passengers add +3 to their Physical Armor. Once the section is in motion, the adept must concentrate to control the direction and speed, or to stop and start its movement. If his concentration is broken, the earth section stops moving and the talent ends.

Multi-Charge

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1+ (per attack; see text)

The adept makes Charging Attacks against multiple opponents. This talent works like the Wheeling Attack talent (***Player's Guide***, p. 85), but the adept may make up to Multi-Charge Rank attacks during the Charging Attack, taking 1 Strain per attack, making Multi-Charge Tests as his Attack Tests in close combat. He cannot attack a single target more than once, however, and must move at least 2 yards (1 hex) between any two attacks.

Multi-Shot

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1+ (per attack; see text)

The adept makes multiple ranged weapon attacks against one or more opponents by making a Multi-Shot Test against each target's Physical Defense, taking 1 Strain per attack. For each successful attack, he makes a Damage Test for the weapon used, as normal. The adept may attempt up to Multi-Shot Rank attacks. Attacks may be directed against just one target or divided up as the adept desires among any targets in range.

Multi-Strike

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1+ (per attack; see text)

The adept makes multiple close combat attacks against one or more opponents by making a Multi-Strike Test against each target's Physical Defense, taking 1 Strain per attack. For each successful attack, he makes a Damage Test for the weapon used, as normal. The adept may attempt up to Multi-Strike Rank attacks. Attacks may be directed against just one target or divided up as the adept desires among any targets within reach.

Multi-Tongue

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept temporarily speaks any language of which he has heard at least seven different words. The adept listens to the speaker, then makes a Multi-Tongue Test against the language's Learning Difficulty (***Player's Guide***, p.131), adding +2 to the Difficulty Number if it is a dialect. If successful, he can speak that language for Multi-Tongue Rank minutes. Each minute of speaking, the adept makes a Multi-Tongue Test to see how well he is communicating. The Test Result determines the level of comprehension attained. Simple sentences or ideas only require a result of 2; normal conversation requires a result of 6; technical conversations require a result of 10; conversations about philosophy require a result of 13.

Multi-Weaving

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

Once per round, the magician may weave spell threads more quickly by making a Multi-Weaving Test. Just like a Thread Weaving Test, this talent may even be used to weave multiple threads in a single Test (***Player's Guide***, p. 133). This talent is the only way a spell thread can be woven and a spell cast, all in the same round.

Netherwalk

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept sends his spirit forth to walk through astral space. This talent is used infrequently, as its use poses grave danger to the adept. The adept's spirit can move about in astral form for Netherwalk Test minutes, but must return to his body before the talent ends, or it becomes separated. Should this happen, the adept dies and his spirit is doomed to wander astral space. The adept may end his Netherwalk at any time once his spirit has re-entered his body. While in astral space, the adept can pass through many barriers that exist only in the physical world. Any attempts to pass through objects with a True Pattern require the adept to make a Netherwalk Test against the object's Spell Defense. If successful, he can continue on past the obstacle. When traveling in astral space, the adept can move no faster than his Movement Rate. During the time he spends Netherwalking, the adept exposes himself to the dangers of astral space. Each minute of travel, the adept suffers damage dependent on the level of astral corruption in the region, as determined by the gamemaster. The adept's natural Mystic Armor protects against this damage. The Netherwalk Damage Table shows the damage that an adept takes during each minute of travel, based on the astral region's classification. This talent also allows the adept to use the astral pollution to

his advantage, obscuring him from the view of any astral denizens or characters viewing astral space. This obscuring effect is also dependent on the type of astral region through which the adept is traveling. The pollution adds a bonus to the adept's Spell Defense, as shown in the Netherwalk Table, based on the region's classification (***Player's Guide***, p. 110).

NETHERWALK DAMAGE TABLE

Region Type	Damage per Minute	Spell Defense
Safe	Step 4	+0
Open	Step 8	+2
Tainted	Step 12	+5
Corrupt	Step 16	+12

PIN

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept makes a rapid series of whirling attacks or threatening gestures, restricting the opponent's movement and cornering him. The talent can be used against Pin Rank characters, but they must all be within close combat reach (usually 1 hex) of the adept. The adept makes a Pin Test as his close combat Attack Test against the highest Physical Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, the targets are pinned by the adept and cannot voluntarily move away from him. The Pin attack inflicts no damage. A pinned target may only attack the adept, but incurs a penalty equal to the adept's Pin Rank to all of his Action Tests. The talent effect lasts until the end of the following round or until the adept next acts, whichever occurs first.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, attempts to pin two enemy Wizards, one with a Physical Defense of 7, the other with a Physical Defense of 10. This makes Kricklen's target Difficulty Number 11 (10+1). He makes a successful Pin Test, with a result of 11. The Wizards cannot voluntarily move away from the t'skrang until he next acts. They also suffer a –4 penalty (the Swordmaster's Pin Rank) to their Action Tests, and may attack no one other than Kricklen.

PLANT SHELTER

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Sustained
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept sings to nearby plants to gain their cooperation, mystically urging them to grow rapidly into a shelter according to his instructions. The shelter takes ten minutes to form and lasts for Plant Shelter Rank hours. The adept's Plant Shelter Test determines the shelter's Death Rating when treated as a barrier (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p.82). The shelter's Physical Armor is equal to the adept's Plant Shelter Rank. A shelter holds the adept and a number of human-sized characters equal to his Plant Shelter Rank. Trolls and obsidimen each count as two human-sized characters, dwarfs as one-half human-size, and windlings as only one-quarter human-size. If more than the allowed number of characters crowds into a shelter, the talent ends and the plants return to their former shape.

QUESTOR

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

Available to all characters (including non-adepts), but only with the gamemaster's permission. The adept taps into the powers of the Passions of Barsaive. A questor exemplifies the qualities of one of the worshipped Passions. Questor abilities and the Passions of Barsaive are more fully described in the **Passions & Questors** chapter, p.162.

QUICK SHOT

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1+ (per attack; see text)

The adept makes multiple attacks in ranged combat during the same round. The adept declares how many attacks he wants to attempt, up to his Quick Shot Rank, before making any Attack Tests, taking 1 Strain per attack declared. He then makes Quick Shot Tests as ranged Attack Tests for as long as his attacks are successful—if an Attack Test fails, he stops making attacks, but still takes the full Strain cost for the number of attacks declared—until there are no more opponents to attack, he has made the declared number of attacks, or he runs out of ammunition. This talent cannot be combined with any talent or skill that allows for additional attacks in either close or ranged combat, such as Second Shot, Multi-Shot, or Second Attack.

RALLY

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0 (1; see text)

The adept inspires his companions in the midst of battle. If the adept is not able to be seen over the heads of his colleagues, he takes 1 Strain to make himself heard. The adept declares those companions whom he wishes to rally, then compares his Rally Test against the Social Defense of each target. If successful, each target may make an immediate Recovery Test, if one is available to him; the talent provides no bonus Recovery Tests. Affected targets also ignore Harried or Knocked Down modifiers until the end of the next round. The adept can inspire up to Rally Rank characters.

RANGE PATTERN

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The magician increases the range of a cast spell. It cannot be used on spells with a range of "Self" or "Touch". The magician makes a Range Pattern Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty (or Reattuning Difficulty, if the spell has no threads) before weaving any threads for the spell. If successful, and the spell is cast successfully, the magician increases the spell's normal range by his Range Pattern Rank × 20 yards (Rank × 20 hexes).

RESHAPE OBJECT

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The adept changes the shape, but not the mass, of non-living objects by making a Reshape Object Test against the higher of the object's Physical Armor, Spell Defense, or a Difficulty Number of 6. If successful, he reshapes the object into a new form over a ten-minute period, requiring concentration throughout this time to complete the shaping. An adept can reshape a maximum weight of material equal to his Reshape Object Rank × 20 pounds. The talent's effect is permanent. The complexity of the final form should be taken into consideration; if the adept wants to reform an object into something more ornate or intricate than the original, the gamemaster may require a Good Result on the Reshape Object Test, for instance.

Camlan picks up a two-pound gold ingot, running his hands over it, stroking and coaxing the metal into a new shape. After ten minutes of activity, he makes a successful Reshape Object (6) Test. Where there once was a simple ingot of gold now sits a plain gold cup.

Resist Pain

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept is more resistant to the effects of injury and other sources of pain. Any Wound penalties he incurs are reduced by his Resist Pain Rank. For example, an adept with Resist Pain at Rank 1 would ignore the –1 penalty from suffering two Wounds. The adept also adds his Resist Pain Rank to any Action Tests he makes to ignore intense pain, which by itself causes no damage, but incapacitates the target, such as the effects of the Pain spell.

Rushing Attack

Step: Rank **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 2 (see text)

The adept increases his movement and attacks opponents while on the move by adding his Rushing Attack Rank to his Movement Rate. He may interrupt his movement at any time during his move, even multiple times, without having to resort to the Splitting Movement combat option and without being Harried as a result. While interrupting his movement, he may attack as normal. However, each time after the first that he interrupts his movement, he takes 1 additional Strain. This talent cannot be combined with other abilities or combat options that increase the adept's Movement Rate or determine distance moved by special rules.

Safe Thought

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept hides a specific type of thought, attitude, or feeling from telepathic probes or divination magic. This talent replaces the "real" thought or attitude with vague and non-committal images or sensations in response to the mind probe. It can only be used on a voluntary subject, who chooses which thought the talent will hide. For example, thoughts that might be hidden by this talent include "the best treasure we found in Parlainth" or "King Gerrik is an idiot." The adept makes a Safe Thought Test against the subject's Spell Defense. If successful, the subject adds the adept's Safe Thought Rank to his Defense Ratings when being targeted by an ability that would detect the hidden thought (such as spells, Interaction Tests, the Rhetoric skill, or the Empathic Sense talent) and as a bonus to any Test made to resist such an attempt, if a Test is allowed. The thought remains hidden for Safe Thought Rank hours or until the thought is discovered, whereupon the talent ends.

Scent Identifier

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept can identify and track a creature on the basis of scent alone. To track a creature through the air, the adept makes a Scent Identifier Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he can follow the trail for Scent Identifier Rank hours. To identify a creature, the adept makes a Scent Identifier Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, each Result Level reveals something different about the target's identity. An Average Result discloses the target's race or species; a Good or Excellent Result reveals the target's gender and age, respectively; an Extraordinary Result reveals the target's general health and emotional state at the time it passed the adept's current position. If the target is someone the adept knows well, an Extraordinary Result also reveals the target's identity. If the area has experienced wind or rain since the target passed through, or if the target passed through more than 2 hours previously, increase the Difficulty Number by +5 for each weather condition or additional hour.

Screaming Arrow

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept intimidates a character by shooting a missile or throwing a weapon that literally "screams" at him. After making a successful ranged Attack Test against his opponent, but before determining damage, the adept makes a Screaming Arrow Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target becomes unnerved by the arrow's shrieking and attempts to get away from the adept's line of sight as fast as possible. Damage is resolved as normal, but the adept cannot use any ability that would change the missile or weapon's physical properties, such as the Flame Arrow talent. The target remains frightened for Screaming Arrow Rank rounds, during which time he will not willingly approach the adept. If the target is not able to completely escape from the immediate area, he attempts to move as far away as possible. If an opportunity presents itself for him to move out of line of sight while the talent is in effect, he does so. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Screaming Arrow Step. If successful, the target overcomes his fear and the talent ends.

Second Chance

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept may reattempt a failed action or try to do better at a marginally successful one. Once per round, after making an Action Test, the adept may disregard the Test Result, making a Second Chance Test in its place; the adept must accept the Second Chance Test result, even if the new Test Result is lower. If the

adept's Second Chance Step is higher than the original Action Test Step, his Second Chance Test is made with a penalty equal to the difference between the Step Numbers.

Sense Magic Item

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept senses the presence of magic items by comparing his Sense Magic Item Test against the Spell Defense of all magic items within a Sense Magic Item Rank × 10 yards (Rank × 5 hexes) radius. If successful, he learns of the items' existence and the approximate direction in which each is located, but not the exact location. The adept may exclude magic items already known to him (such as his companions' or his own), or he may exclude types of magic items (such as Blood Charms or Healing Aids) from the sense.

Shackle Shrug

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Sustained
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept escapes from bonds around his hands or feet by gradually straining against them and using extraordinary flexibility and magic to extricate his wrists or ankles from openings too small to wriggle out of normally. The adept spends one minute attempting to get out of the bonds, then makes a Shackle Shrug Test against a Difficulty Number based on the type of bindings. Twine or string carries a Difficulty Number of 5; rope tied by an inexperienced captor has a Difficulty Number of 7; rope tied by an experienced jailer has a Difficulty Number of 9; steel shackles have a Difficulty Number of 11; magical shackles have a Difficulty Number equal to the shackles' Spell Defense. Because it is always easier to escape from shackles that bind the wrists than those around the ankles, add +2 to the Difficulty Number if the shackles bind the feet. If successful, the adept escapes. If he fails, the adept may try again, but requires a Result Level one higher than the previous attempt (to a maximum of Extraordinary). The adept may make up to Shackle Shrug Rank attempts per set of bindings each day.

Shared Matrix

Step: Rank **Action:** NA
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

Magicians use a shared matrix to hold multiple spells. The combined Spell Circles of all spells held within the matrix cannot exceed the Shared Matrix Rank. For example, a Rank 7 Shared Matrix could hold one Third Circle spell and four First Circle spells, but could not hold two Fourth Circle spells. The matrix' Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent, but is protected in the same way as an Armored Matrix; its Mystic Armor is equal to the magician's natural Mystic Armor plus his Shared Matrix Rank. A Shared Matrix cannot hold pre-woven spell threads. Each Shared Matrix represents a separate talent with its own Rank, and is improved independently.

Shield Beater

Step: Rank **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept delivers devastating blows, cleaving through shield and armor alike. He makes a close combat Attack Test as normal. If successful, the adept reduces his opponent's Physical Armor by his Shield Beater Rank, increasing the likelihood that his attack will inflict damage. The talent also increases the chance of shattering an opponent's shield. If the adept uses the Shattering a Shield combat option (***Player's Guide***, p. 225) and achieves a Good Result on his Attack Test, he adds his Shield Beater Rank to the Damage Test when determining if the shield is destroyed.

Show Armor Flaw

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The adept reveals the weaknesses in an opponent's armor by making a Show Armor Flaw Test against the higher of the target's or his armor's Spell Defense. If successful, any vulnerabilities in the armor are illuminated for Show Armor Flaw Rank rounds, reducing the Result Level needed for Armor-Defeating Hits by one level (Excellent to Good, Extraordinary to Excellent, and so on) for any characters attacking the target. The effects of Show Armor Flaw are not cumulative with the Spot Armor Flaw talent.

Soften Blade

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept weakens a weapon he can see within Soften Blade Rank × 6 yards (Rank × 3 hexes), reducing the amount of damage it inflicts, by making a Soften Blade Test against the higher of the weapon's or its wielder's Spell Defense. If successful, his Soften Blade Rank is applied as a penalty to the weapon's Damage Step (to a minimum of Damage Step 1) for one hour.

Krarg wants to use his Soften Blade talent against a troll wielding a pole-axe and an elf with a longbow. His Soften Blade Rank is 6. He can reduce the pole-axe's Damage Step from 8 to 2, or he can reduce the longbow's Damage Step from 5 to 1—his Talent Rank is not fully applied. If the longbow were a magical weapon with a higher Damage Step, Krarg's higher rank would pay off.

Song of Deflection

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept improves his defense against attacks by singing or humming a little song, then making a Song of Deflection Test against the highest Spell Defense among his opponents, +1 for each additional character. If successful, he adds his Song of Deflection Rank to his Defense Ratings for Song of Deflection Rank rounds. While the adept is singing, he may only perform actions that do not require him to use his voice. If he stops singing before the duration expires, the talent ends.

Soul Shatter

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept's spirit is pitted against that of another character. The adept touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept's Soul Shatter Test determines how much damage is inflicted (Mystic Armor provides protection). If the target suffers a Wound, his soul begins to break apart, piece by piece. The target continues to take damage each round for Soul Shatter Rank rounds, automatically suffering at least 1 Wound, plus additional Damage Points equal to the adept's Soul Shatter Rank (natural Mystic Armor provides protection). Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test

against the Soul Shatter Step. If successful, the talent ends. If the target does not suffer a Wound from the initial Soul Shatter Test, the adept's spirit "buckles" from the pressure instead. Each round the adept, rather than the target, suffers at least 1 Wound, plus additional Damage Points equal to his Soul Shatter Rank, as if someone had successfully used the talent against him. The adept may make Willpower Tests as normal to end the effect.

Spell Crystal Lock

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 0 (see text)

Blood Magic is used by the magician to lock a spell into a matrix, extending the spell's duration. The magician makes a Spell Crystal Lock Test instead of a Spellcasting Test when casting a spell from a spell matrix. If successful, the talent locks the spell into the matrix for a year and a day, during which time the matrix cannot be used to hold any other spell. The spell's duration is extended for the same period. During this time, the spell matrix takes on a crystalline appearance when viewed from astral space. The magician takes 2 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed until the talent ends. A successful Dispel Magic Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty dispels the lock and ends the talent. Spells with no effective duration (immediate effect spells, such as Spirit Dart) or with a duration of 1 round, cannot have their duration extended through use of this talent. The talent can be used to lock spells into any type of spell matrix (a Spell, Armored, Enhanced, or Shared Matrix), however the effect only "locks" the spell cast using the Spell Crystal Lock talent into the matrix; any other spells that are present are erased from the matrix. Threads woven into the spell matrix remain in place. However, since the spell cannot be cast again from that matrix until the talent's duration expires, they are effectively useless. The magician may have no more locked matrices than his Spell Crystal Lock Rank.

Spirit Strike

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept makes a close combat attack against an opponent who is in astral space by making a Spirit Strike Test against the higher of the target's Spell Defense or a Difficulty Number of 6. If successful, he hits the target, and his weapon (if making a melee attack) or limb (if making an unarmed attack) disappears from view as it enters astral space, before re-emerging after the attack, trailing cold green wisps of mist. The adept makes a Damage Test as normal, based on the weapon used. Defensive talents or skills, such as Avoid Blow and Riposte, cannot be used against attacks made with the Spirit Strike talent. The adept must use some form of astral sensing to perceive his astral opponent or he suffers a –5 Blindness penalty to his Attack Tests when using this talent.

Stone Skin

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

Portions of the adept's muscles and ligaments toughen to become more resistant to physical damage and his skin's appearance becomes pebbly, even jagged, and is tough as stone. Use of the Stone Skin talent requires one of the adept's Recovery Tests; if he has no Recovery Tests available to him, he cannot use this talent. The adept adds his Stone Skin Rank to his Physical Armor Rating for Stone Skin Test rounds. This effect is similar to the obsidiman Natural Armor racial ability (***Player's Guide***, p.22), though obsidimen can benefit further from this talent.

Storm Shield

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The adept creates a shield from sheer will by making a Storm Shield (6) Test. If successful, the shield manifests as a fog-like disk of air, hissing and popping as it coruscates with blue-white electricity, for Storm Shield Rank rounds. The shield Size corresponds to the Result Level achieved: an Average Result creates a buckler; a Good Result creates a footman's shield; an Excellent Result creates a crystal raider shield; an Extraordinary Result creates a body shield (***Player's Guide***, p. 254). The shield provides protection as a typical shield of its type, but has no Initiative Penalty, and adds the adept's Storm Shield Rank as a bonus to Shield Charge Tests. In addition, it causes shocks to attackers. When a close combat attack misses the adept without the use of evasive talents such as Avoid Blow, the attacker suffers a number of electrical Damage Points equal to the Storm Shield Rank (no armor provides protection).

Summoning Circle

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Sustained
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept creates a protective circle to contain a summoned elemental or extra-planar being. The adept spends one hour carefully drawing the circle, which must be big enough to hold the entity being summoned. After he creates a summoning circle, the adept can summon entities into it using the Summon talent, or by another means, such as a spell. Entities summoned into the circle cannot escape without first destroying it. The adept's Summoning Circle Test determines the Difficulty Number to break free for any being trapped inside. The effect lasts for Summoning Circle Rank hours. Each hour, the summoned entity may make a Willpower Test against the circle's Difficulty Number. If successful, the circle breaks and the entity is freed. The adept may destroy his own circle at any time by touching and symbolically "cutting" it.

Tame Mount

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept tames an animal to be used as a mount by touching the animal and making a Tame Mount Test against the animal's Social Defense. If successful, the animal's Attitude toward the adept improves by one degree per Result Level, to a maximum of Friendly. Once a mount's attitude has been raised to Friendly, the adept may ride it. No one else may ride the mount until the animal is trained; the mount is automatically Unfriendly to anyone other than the adept who tries to ride it, including any characters to whom the mount may have had a better attitude before. This talent may be used on an animal only once each day.

Thoughtful Expression

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept uses his own awareness to create an illusory face on another character that acts as a magical "spy glass," useful for observing events and situations from a distance. The adept touches the character and makes a Thoughtful Expression Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a hair-thin illusion of the adept's face is superimposed over the target's own features for Result Level hours. The adept's telepathic link with the illusion allows him to see and sense everything that the face does. By concentrating, he may control the expression of the face and

even speak through it, though the voice still sounds like the adept unless he has a way of changing his voice. The adept can sense and control the face so long as it is within Rank × 50 yards (Rank × 25 hexes). Outside of this range, the connection is lost and the talent ends. The effort of "looking" in two places at once is disorienting; during the talent's duration, the adept is Harried. The illusion can be sensed and disbelieved with a Disbelief Difficulty of 8 and a Sensing Difficulty of 16.

Thunder Axe

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Free
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

Following a successful melee Attack Test, the adept makes a Thunder Axe Test instead of a Damage Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is Stunned (***Player's Guide***, p.228) for Thunder Axe Rank rounds.

Trace Missile

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept traces the path of a missile or thrown weapon simply by looking at it and making a Trace Missile Test against the attacker's Spell Defense. If successful, he traces the flight path back to the attacker, marking his forehead with a symbol similar to that created by the Mystic Aim (***Player's Guide***, p.76) or Stopping Aim (***Player's Guide***, p.82) talents. This symbol remains in place for Trace Missile Rank minutes. As long as the target is marked, the adept is aware of the target's location and can attack him without any visibility penalties. The talent can only be used to trace a single missile each round.

Trample

Step: Rank **Action:** Free
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

Amounted adept increases the damage inflicted by his mount's attacks. If his mount makes a successful Attack Test, the adept may add his Trample Rank to the mount's Damage Test. Despite the talent's Name, the adept's mount does not have to "stomp on" an opponent to benefit from Trample; the magic of the talent boosts the damage of the mount's attack regardless of the attack method employed.

Truth Skit

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Sustained
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept recreates an event from the past with the help of other participants, all of whom must volunteer to be part of the Truth Skit and must also have been part of the original scene. Truth Skit recreates an event that occurred no more than Truth Skit Rank years and days in the past. The adept plays the parts of all of the people who were present in the original event, but are not present now. A minute of Truth Skit replays one minute of the original event. Each minute, the adept makes a Truth Skit Test against the highest Social Defense among the participants, excluding himself. If successful, the participants must say what they said in the original scene and must mimic the actions they originally took. If failed, the participants may say whatever they like or take whatever action they wish. The maximum duration of the skit is Truth Skit Rank minutes.

Unmount

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Simple
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

The adept's ability to knock an opponent from his mount is improved. If the adept's Attack Test succeeds, instead of making a Damage Test, he makes an Unmount Test against the target's Strength Step. If successful, the target is knocked from his mount, taking Falling damage and suffering the effects of Knockdown (***Player's Guide***, p.228). Unmount can be used with the Setting Against a Charge combat option (***Player's Guide***, p.225), but does not require the target to make a Charging Attack, only that he be mounted. Unmount is not a Damage Test, so Setting Against a Charge does not provide a damage bonus from the mount's Strength.

Venom

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept sprays a fine mist of contact poison at an opponent by making an unarmed Attack Test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, he makes a Venom Test as his Damage Test. Venom damage automatically bypasses the target's Physical Armor, unless he can find some way, magical or mundane, to make the armor completely airtight. Each round, the poison continues to inflict a number of Damage Points equal to the Venom Rank, for Venom Rank rounds. A target may spend his Standard Action to resist the poison, making a Toughness Test against the Venom Step. If successful, the poison is rendered inert. A target can suffer from only one Venom talent poison at a time. The venom cannot be used with a manufactured weapon.

VITAL STRIKE

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept finds and exploits weaknesses in an opponent's anatomy by making a Vital Strike Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. If successful, he adds his Vital Strike Rank to the result of the next Damage Test he makes against that opponent.

VITALITY

Step: Rank+TOU **Action:** Sustained
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept recovers damage more effectively, receiving a number of bonus Recovery Tests each day equal to his Vitality Rank, which may be spent the same way as normal Recovery Tests; for example to heal damage or fuel talents such as Fireblood, Wood Skin, or Life Check. If one of these bonus tests is used to heal damage, the adept makes a Vitality Test in place of a Recovery Test, under all the same restrictions as making a normal Recovery Test.

WARNING SHOT

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Free
Karma: No **Strain:** 0

When armed with a ranged weapon, the adept makes his opponents think twice about attacking him. His ranged attack does not harm his opponent, but is instead aimed to strike very close to the target, passing through a shirt sleeve, knocking a mug from the target's hand, or otherwise demonstrating the adept's weapon prowess. The adept makes a ranged combat Attack Test, as normal. If successful, he makes a Warning Shot Test in place of a Damage Test against the target's Social Defense. On an Average Result, the target is Harried. On a Good Result, the target is not only Harried, but won't act against the adept unless first attacked by him or his obvious allies. The effect lasts for Warning Shot Rank rounds or until the target makes a successful Willpower Test against the adept's Warning Shot Step.

WARP MISSILE

Step: Rank+PER **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The adept reduces the effectiveness of an opponent's missile weapon, warping and twisting it, and generally impairing its ability to inflict harm. He makes a Warp Missile Test against the higher of the target's or his weapon's Spell Defense. If successful, the target reduces the weapon's Damage Step by the adept's Warp Missile rank, to a minimum of 0. The adept can affect any missile weapon visible to him up to a range equal to his Warp Missile Rank × 20 yards (Rank × 10 hexes). The effect lasts Warp Missile Rank rounds.

WATER DANCING

Step: Rank+CHA **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept dances on the surface of a body of water, making a Water Dancing Test against the highest Spell Defense of all water creatures that can see or sense him. If successful, the adept is suspended on the water's surface and adds his Water Dancing Rank to Interaction Tests he makes against the creatures for Water Dancing Rank minutes. Aquatic and enchanted creatures within range are attracted to the adept and, unless actively discouraged, approach him while he is dancing.

WEAPON BREAKER

Step: Rank+STR **Action:** Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 0

The adept attacks an opponent's weapon with the intent of shattering it. He makes a close combat Attack Test as normal. If successful, he makes a Weapon Breaker Test against the higher of the opponent's or his weapon's Spell Defense, instead of a Damage Test. If successful, the weapon's Damage Step is reduced by –2 per Result Level. An Extraordinary Result shatters non-magical weapons; they are ruined. Threaded weapons can only be reduced to a minimum Damage Step of 1, and cannot be shattered. Damaged weapons can be repaired (***Player's Guide***, p. 253); shattered weapons cannot. Weapon Breaker works only on manufactured weapons, not natural weapons, such as a creature's fangs or claws.

WEAPON WARD

Step: Rank+WIL **Action:** Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The adept better defends against attacks made with weapons, but not unarmed attacks or the natural armaments of creatures, such as claws or beaks. He adds his Weapon Ward rank to his Physical, Social, and Spell Defense whenever one of those defenses is targeted by an ability that relies on a weapon (such as Melee Weapons, Stopping Aim, or Impressive Shot), for Weapon Ward Test rounds.

WHIRLWIND

Step: Rank+DEX **Action:** Standard
Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The adept whirls around to strike multiple foes within close combat distance, making a Whirlwind Test as his close combat Attack Test, and comparing the Test Result against each opponent's Physical Defense to determine who is hit. His Whirl-

wind Test is treated as a number of separate Attack Tests for the purpose of determining Armor-Defeating Hits and special rules for Damage Tests. The adept may use damage-enhancing abilities such as Crushing Blow independently for each hit. Whirlwind cannot be used in the same round as other talents granting extra attacks, such as Second Attack or Second Weapon.

WIND BOW

Step: Rank
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept manipulates the wind, shaping the whirling, shimmering elemental forces into a bow, crossbow, or other missile weapon which can propel a projectile with terrific force. The weapon is used like a normal weapon of its kind, but has a Damage Step equal to the adept's Wind Bow Rank. Attack Tests are made as normal. The weapon lasts for Wind Bow Rank minutes, but the adept may dispel it at any time. The weapon may be broken or taken from the adept like any other weapon of its type, in which case it is automatically dispelled.

WOUND TRANSFER

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Standard
Karma: Yes
Strain: 0

An injured adept transfers damage to another living being he is touching by making a Wound Transfer Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he heals a Wound and transfers a number of Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold to the target (no armor provides protection). If the damage received by the target is at least equal to its Wound Threshold, it suffers a Wound. The adept cannot transfer more Damage Points than his Current Damage allows.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

TALENT KNACKS

Talents may define the adept, but it's the refinement of these abilities that defines the true adept. Basic swordplay is adequate for your average Swordmaster. I, however, am not your average Swordmaster!

• Kricklen, T'skrang Swordmaster •

Talent knacks are specializations that enable adepts to use their talents to create effects that differ from the talents' normal effects. By widening the scope of what talents allow characters to do, knacks flesh out the types of actions adepts can perform when using their talents, and create greater opportunity to make each character unique. This chapter provides guidelines for learning, creating, and using talent knacks, including full descriptions for some of the many talent knacks available to adepts.

LEARNING TALENT KNACKS

Characters may spend Legend Points to learn new talent knacks. Unlike talents, talent knacks are not otherwise improved once learned. A talent knack is learned once, and can be used at any point thereafter. Characters may develop talent knacks on their own or learn them from members of their Disciplines who are prepared to teach them. When advancing Circles in their Disciplines, some adepts take special care to find tutors with knowledge of specific knacks that they may also wish to learn. While learning the tenets of his new Discipline Circle, a character will often take the additional time and expense to learn one or more talent knacks. A character that wants to learn a talent knack between Circle advances needs to either seek out a tutor willing to teach him that knack, or prepare to develop it on his own. The difficulty of this task is determined by the gamemaster.

To learn a talent knack, a character must:

- Know the knack's Base Talent at a minimum Rank
- Study with a tutor or develop the knack on his own
- Spend an amount of Legend Points depending on the minimum Rank

MINIMUM TALENT RANK

Every talent knack specifies "**Talent:**" and "**Rank:**" characteristics (see **Talent Knack Descriptions**, p. 120). To learn a talent knack, an adept must know the specified talent at the specified minimum Rank if he knows the talent as a Talent Option, and two Ranks lower than specified if he knows that talent as a Discipline Talent. To determine if a character is eligible to learn a talent knack, only the character's innate Talent Rank gained through his Discipline training is used; Rank bonuses such as from magic items do not count. Talents learned outside of Discipline training, such as through a human's Versatility Talent or a windling's Astral Sight Talent, cannot be used to learn Talent Knacks.

Arrow Cutting is a knack for the Parry talent and specifies it is available at a Parry Talent Rank of 9. Because Parry is a Discipline Talent for Swordmasters, however, this knack is available to Swordmasters who know Parry at a Talent Rank of 7. It is not available to a Swordmaster who has an innate Parry Rank of 6 with a +1 Rank bonus from a magic item for a total Rank of 7, nor is it available to a human Warrior who has learned Parry through Versatility, even though he could have learned it as a Talent Option.

Thread Weaving Knacks

Thread Weaving knacks are talent knacks based on the Thread Weaving talent. Because Thread Weaving is unique to each Discipline and treated as a different talent for each Discipline, some special rules apply as to the talent a knack specifies. If a knack specifies "**Talent:** Thread Weaving," the knack is available to any Thread Weaving talent, no matter the Discipline from which it originates. If a knack specifies the Name of a specific Thread Weaving talent, such as "**Talent:** Elementalism," it can only be learned by adepts receiving the specified variant of Thread Weaving (in this case, Elementalism, which means Elementalists, but also Weaponsmiths of at least Ninth Circle who treat their Thread Smithing talent as if it were the Elementalism talent). If a knack specifies "**Talent:** Thread Weaving (magicians only)," it is available to all magician Thread Weaving talents of the spellcasting Disciplines (Thread Weaving talents that allow the weaving of spell threads and attuning of matrices per standard rules; for the purpose of this book, this covers Illusionism, Elementalism, Nethermancy, Wizardry, and Weaponsmiths who gain the Elementalism ability at Ninth Circle).

Unless specifically noted in the talent knack's description, Thread Weaving knacks available for several types of Thread Weaving only need to be learned once, based on the lowest Legend Point Cost for the Thread Weaving talent available to the character.

Memsa is an ork Third Circle Thief/Second Circle Illusionist. She knows Illusionism (Thread Weaving) at Rank 5 as a Discipline talent from her Illusionist Discipline, but because she is not yet a Fourth Circle Thief, she has yet to learn Thief Weaving. Memsa thinks the Unraveling talent knack would be useful so she locates a teacher and prepares to learn it. For most multi-Discipline characters, Thread Weaving would be a Circle 1–4 talent. Because Memsa learned Illusionism

from her second Discipline (Illusionist), and she does not yet know it from her first Discipline (Thief), it is paid for as if it were a Circle 5–8 talent (see the Talent Cost Equivalent Table). Checking the Talent Rank Cost Table, the cost for Memsa to improve a Circle 5–8 talent to Rank 5 is 1,300 Legend Points. This is what it costs the ork to learn the talent knack. If she waits until she advances to become a Fourth Circle Thief, then this cost drops to 800 Legend Points. Of course, this could take a while, and orks are not known for their patience.

Study or Develop Knack

Learning a talent knack takes considerable time and effort; even more than raising a Talent Rank. While raising a Talent Rank is a straightforward increase in the adept's ability to use a talent, learning a talent knack means changing the way the entire talent works by learning an alternative way to use it. To learn a talent knack, a character must be rested and in good health—not suffering from any damage, wounds, or illnesses—for the entire duration of training or development. Only one talent knack can be learned at a time.

When learning a talent knack from a tutor, a character spends four hours a day in training and meditation with the teacher, for a number of days equal to the minimum Rank at which he is required to know the talent. (Talent knacks for Talent Options require two more days of training than talent knacks learned for Discipline Talents.) Tutors often charge a fee for teaching a talent knack—usually 50 silver pieces per day of training.

When developing a talent knack on his own, the character must study and reflect on his talent for a number of weeks equal to the minimum Rank at which he is required to know the talent, instead of that number in days. As with tutored learning, talent knacks for Discipline Talents are developed at a faster rate. If a player creates his own talent knack, it is learned as if it were developed without a tutor (see **Creating Your Own Talent Knacks**, p. 120).

Kricklen considers how he is to learn the Arrow Cutting talent knack. As a Swordmaster, his minimum required Parry Rank is 7. With a tutor, he would have to spend four hours per day for seven days in training with his tutor, and can expect the tutor to ask for 350 silver pieces of compensation. He might be able to develop the knack on his own, though. This would not only save him money, but also the time to find a tutor. The time saved might be worth the seven weeks of training required.

Spend Legend Points

Talent knacks must be paid for with Legend Points. The character pays Legend Points to learn the knack only once. From that point on, a character can use the knack whenever he uses the talent. The Legend Point cost of the talent knack is the same as the amount of Legend Points the character had to spend to increase the talent to the minimum Rank required to learn the talent knack. As with the training time required, adepts knowing the talent as a Discipline Talent use a lower Rank to determine cost.

Kricklen determines the Legend Points he needs to spend to learn the Arrow Cutting talent knack. Parry being a Discipline Talent of his, he spends the same amount of Legend Points it cost him to raise the talent to Rank 7, which for an Initiate/Novice (Circles 1 through 4) talent is 2,100 Legend Points. If the Warrior in his adventuring group, who knows Parry as a Talent Option since First Circle, were to learn the Arrow Cutting knack, he would have to pay the full amount of 5,500 Legend Points, the same as increasing a First Circle talent to a Rank of 9. If that Warrior had learned Parry at Fifth Circle, he would have to pay 8,900 Legend Points, the cost of increasing a Fifth Circle talent to Rank 9.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer/Elementalist/Warrior, is learning the Pin Down talent knack. This knack is based on the Unarmed Combat talent—available to Warriors at First Circle—and requires the elf to know it at a minimum of Rank 5 (which he does), as Unarmed Combat is a Discipline Talent for Warriors. Checking the Equivalent Talent Circle Table, accounting for Warrior being his third Discipline, the cost for Caelarion to learn a Circle 1–4 talent for his third Discipline at Rank 5 is equivalent to learning a Circle 9–12 talent for a first Discipline at Rank 3—800 Legend Points. This is what it costs Caelarion to learn the talent knack.

Using Talent Knacks

Once a player has learned a talent knack for his character, the character may use the knack whenever he uses the appropriate talent. Unless the knack's description states otherwise, the player simply declares that his character is using it. For example, a Nethermancer who has learned the Maintain Spell Threads knack may use it whenever he casts a spell that requires one or more threads. Note that, as with talents, all costs of using the knack must be paid beforehand and use must normally be announced; for example, using a talent knack requires the Strain to be spent before the test is made, or if a talent knack requires a Good Result to succeed instead of an Average Result, the use of the knack has to be announced before the test is made—achieving a Good Result and then using the knack "after the fact" is not allowed.

Using a talent knack is treated as a use of the talent unless otherwise noted. This means that any conditions to use the talent must be met. For example, if the talent requires a Standard Action to use, so does using the knack. Additionally, talent knacks may have their own conditions and prerequisites to be used; for example, knacks almost always have a higher Strain cost. These replace the conditions of the talent where appropriate. In effect, using a talent knack incurs the stricter costs and requirements of talent and talent knack. If the talent knack has been used successfully, it has its own effect that usually replaces the talent effect; though sometimes its effect is an addition to or a variation of the talent effect. Some talent knacks may change the requirements of a talent by simply increasing a talent's cost.

The Arcane Curses talent knack is based on the Arcane Mutterings talent. When using it, the adept incurs the following cost and requirements: he must spend a Standard Action (from the talent), take 1 Strain (from the knack), spend Karma if Arcane Mutterings is not a Discipline Talent (from the talent), and requires an Excellent result on the test (from the knack). If successful, the targets suffer the talent's effect even if the adept stops muttering (the knack circumvents a requirement for the talent's effect). Note the talent knack does not automatically apply when Arcane Mutterings achieves an Excellent Result—use of Arcane Curses has to be announced before the test, and it does not affect the target in any way on an Average or Good Result, not even with Arcane Mutterings' normal effect.

CREATING YOUR OWN TALENT KNACKS

The goal of learning talent knacks is to further individualize a character. Given the large number of talents available to characters and the numerous ways to develop a character concept, a definitive list of all talent knacks would be endless. The talent knacks in this chapter only represent examples of all possible knacks and include a minimum of knacks required for other tasks performed by adepts in the world of **Earthdawn**, such as enchanting or Naming spells. Players can create their own knacks for their characters in cooperation with the gamemaster. Learning such knacks is treated as developing a talent knack without a tutor (**Study or Develop Knack**, p. 119). The following guidelines will help keep any talent knacks you create from unbalancing your game. As always, the gamemaster makes the final decision about allowing a talent knack in his game and about the specifics of that knack.

To create a talent knack, the player needs to decide on a talent to base the knack on, what effect he wants to create with the knack, at what Talent Rank the knack becomes available to the character, and if using the knack will cost Strain or have a minimum Result Level requirement that differs from the original talent use, or some other sort of cost. Using a talent knack should come at a higher cost to the character or be more difficult than using the unmodified talent.

Talent

While looking at the talent's description to determine a talent knack's effect and characteristics, keep in mind two general rules for creating talent knacks. First, talent knacks should provide an additional or specialized use of a talent; they should not duplicate other talents or eliminate the need to learn other talents. Ideally talent knacks should support or extend a talent only. Second, talent knacks should not be used to "make a talent right" if you consider it lacking or unfit for your group's style of play; in this case, modify the talent instead.

Rank

As a general rule, talent knacks should never be available below Rank 4, and only a few should be available below Rank 6. These parameters encourage an adept to master the basics of a talent before learning knacks based on the talent. Keep in mind that Discipline Talents allow an adept to learn knacks more easily, but that the knack descriptions assume a Talent Option to be the base talent. When comparing your knack to talent knacks from this chapter, remember some characters can learn knacks from this chapter at lower Ranks than the knack specifies.

Strain

A talent knack should cause at least the same amount of Strain the talent does, and this only if is has some other sort of cost or requirement to allow for the knack's special effect. If a knack simply expands or alters the talent's effects without any other changes, the talent knack must have a higher Strain cost than the talent. Exceptions can be made for talent knacks that are merely for roleplaying reasons or visual effects, the Legend Point Cost of the knack might be enough to warrant a knack not having any additional cost.

Description

Any cost or requirements incurred by the knack, or any change to the cost or requirements of the base talent, need to be written down in the knack's description, along with the knack's effect or changes to the talent's effect the knack makes.

TALENT KNACK DESCRIPTIONS

Each talent knack has the characteristics of Talent, Rank, and Strain cost. The "**Talent:**" notation notes the talent on which the knack is based. The "**Rank:**" notation indicates the minimum Rank a character must possess in that talent to learn the knack; reduce this number by 2 for Discipline Talents. The "**Strain:**" notation shows the amount of Strain damage the adept takes when using the knack. Unless stated otherwise in the knack description, this replaces the Strain cost of the base talent.

For convenience, the talent knacks in this chapter are arranged in alphabetical order. A summary, ordered by base talent, can be found in the **Appendix**, p.182.

ADEPT'S BEST FRIEND

Talent: Tracking
Rank: 6 **Strain:** 3

The adept locates another character's mount, familiar, or animal companion by touching the owner and making a Tracking Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept can follow tracks to the animal as if he had successfully used the Tracking talent. This knack can only locate animals with strong bonds to their owners, such as a Cavalryman's mount, a familiar, or a Beastmaster's animal companions.

AIR CONDITIONING

Talent: Temperature
Rank: 6 **Strain:** 2

The adept changes the temperature around himself, instead of that of a room, to maintain a comfortable temperature at all

times. Use of this knack allows him to wear light clothing in freezing environments or to keep cool while walking along the shores of Death's Sea. The knack does not protect the adept against wind and weather, or heat- and cold-based attacks directed at him.

AIR LEGS

Talent: Air Sailing
Rank: 4 **Strain:** 2

The adept keeps his footing in treacherous conditions while on an airship by making an Air Sailing Test in place of a Dexterity Test to avoid falling off the airship or in other similar situations "aboard ship" that require him to make a Dexterity Test. This knack cannot be used when the adept is on "dry land."

AIR MOUNT

Talent: Spirit Mount
Rank: 13 **Strain:** 6

The adept's spirit mount gains the ability to fly through the air at the same Movement Rate it uses when on land. The Air Mount requires a Good Result to be summoned.

ANCHORED SPELL

Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 1 Blood Wound (see text)

The magician affixes a spell pattern to a wall, door, or other fixed object, creating a temporary ward. The magician must first cast the spell against the Spell Defense of the object to which the spell will be anchored. He must achieve an Excellent Result on his Spellcasting Test or the anchoring does not take (he takes Damage for the attempt, but may try again). The magician powers the anchored spell pattern by taking Permanent Damage equal to his Wound Threshold, receiving a Blood Wound in the process (***Player's Guide***, p.123). This damage cannot be healed until the spell ends. Once successfully cast, the anchored spell remains in place for a year and a day, or until it is triggered or dispelled. Any character passing within 3 yards of the anchoring object may trigger the spell. A magician can avoid triggering his own anchored spell by making a successful Spellcasting (6) Test. Once the spell has been triggered, it ends and cannot be triggered again.

Anchored spells created with this knack function as ward traps (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 112). Base the ward's game mechanics on the magician's abilities at the time of casting and the anchored spell, as follows:

Anchored Spell Ward

Detection: Magician's Spellcasting Step
Spell Defense: Magician's Spell Defense
Disarm: Anchored spell's Dispel Difficulty

Trigger: The gamemaster makes a Spellcasting Test for the ward against the Spell Defense of any character or creature passing within 3 yards. The Step Number is equal to the Spellcasting Step of the magician who created the ward. If successful, the anchored spell is triggered. Magicians may anchor spells with a password or other type of signal that allows individuals to pass the ward without triggering it.

Initiative: Magician's Spellcasting Step+10

Effect: The anchored spell's normal effect occurs. Use the Spellcasting Step of the magician who anchored the spell. The ward's Effect Step equals the spell's Effect Step, and uses the base Willpower Step of the magician.

ANGELIC APPEARANCE

Talent: Disguise Self
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1

The adept uses the Illusionism magic inherent in the Disguise Self talent to temporarily boost his charisma. Each time he interacts with another character, the adept may use Angelic Appearance to make a Disguise Self Test against the target's Spell Defense. On his next Interaction Test against the target, the adept gains a +1 bonus for each Result Level achieved, starting with a Good Result.

ANIMAL'S BEST FRIEND

Talent: Tracking
Rank: 6 **Strain:** 4

The adept locates the owner of a mount, familiar, or animal companion by touching the animal and making a Tracking Test against the owner's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept can follow tracks to the animal's owner as if he had successfully used the Tracking talent. This knack can only locate targets with strong bonds to their animals, such as a Cavalryman's mount, a familiar, or a Beastmaster's animal companions.

ARCANE CURSES

Talent: Arcane Mutterings
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1

The adept utters vague but vile curses at his enemies and makes an Arcane Mutterings Test, but requires an Excellent Result. If successful, the targets believe they are cursed, and the adept is not required to continue muttering for the targets to remain Harried.

Armor Beater

Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: 10 **Strain:** 3

The adept bypasses an opponent's armor more easily, ignoring any Deflection Bonus to determine if an Armor-Defeating Hit is achieved.

Arrow Cutting

Talent: Parry
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

The adept parries attacks with missiles and thrown weapons by making a Parry Test against his opponents' ranged combat Attack Tests. If successful, the adept deflects the missiles or weapons away from him.

Arrow Stop

Talent: Impressive Shot
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept stops a projectile or weapon he has used for a ranged attack just as it hits his opponent, making an Impressive Shot Test against the target's Physical Defense, as normal. On an Average or Good Result, the attack misses. On an Excellent Result, the arrow stops just as it nicks the target, who takes 1 Damage Point (no armor provides protection), and allows the adept to immediately make an Interaction Test (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p.93) against the target's Social Defense.

Assault

Talent: Air Sailing
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 4

If the adept is the captain of an airship, he gains an advantage when attempting the Firing maneuver against one or more enemy airships (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion*** for ship combat rules) by making an Air Sailing Test against his airship's Firepower Step. If successful, he gains a +2 bonus to the airship's Firepower or Maneuverability Test to reflect the vessel's superior positioning. If failed, the adept suffers a –2 penalty to the maneuver's Failure Modifier to reflect the vessel's more vulnerable positioning. Assault can only be used once per ship combat round.

Astral Spy

Talent: Orbiting Spy
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 1+ (see text)

The adept hides an orbiting spy in astral space, making it invisible to anyone without the ability to astrally view or detect objects. Using this knack causes the adept 1 Strain to conjure the spy, +1 Strain for each Orbiting Spy Test made during the talent's duration.

Astral Tracking

Talent: Tracking
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

The adept, who must be able to see into astral space (using the Astral Sight talent or a similar ability), can use his Tracking talent to follow a character in astral space by using this talent knack.

Attribute Pattern

Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 15 **Strain:** 2

The adept weaves a temporary astral filter allowing him to channel raw magical energy into his pattern, enhancing one of his Attributes. He chooses one of his Attributes and makes a Thread Weaving Test against the Attribute Value. This Test requires 1 Karma Point to be spent. For every Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result, he increases the Attribute's Step by +1 for a number of rounds equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. Any one Attribute can only benefit from one use of Attribute Pattern.

Backbiter

Talent: Bank Shot
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 3

The adept ricochets a missile or thrown weapon so that it hits a shielded opponent from behind by making a Bank Shot Test in place of his ranged Attack Test. On a Good Result, the target is struck in the back and loses the protection of his shield, including the Deflection Bonus.

Bind Spirit

Talent: Summon
Rank: 6 **Strain:** 2

The adept places a summoned spirit in an item's pattern, gaining constant access to the spirit's powers. Bind Spirit Tests are performed using the adept's Summon Step (see **Spirit Binding**, p. 158, for more information).

BLESS ALLY

Talent: Second Chance
Rank: 12 **Strain:** 4

If the adept has declared a Reserved Action and a target fails an Action Test, the adept may take his turn and use Second Chance to replace the target's Action Test. The Second Chance Test receives a penalty as normal, determined by the difference between the Second Chance Step and the Step Number used by the target.

BLOOD COMPASS

Talent: Bone Compass
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 3

The adept uses his bone compass on a target he has not previously examined astrally. He requires an object linked to the target, such as a drop of blood, a piece of clothing, or a Pattern Item, which he touches to the bone before making a Bone Compass Test. If successful, the Bone Compass talent works as normal.

BOARDING ACTION

Talent: Air Sailing
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 4

If the adept is the captain of an airship, he gains an advantage when attempting the Boarding maneuver against an enemy airship (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion*** for ship combat rules) by making an Air Sailing Test against his airship's Maneuverability Step. If successful, he gains a +2 bonus to the airship's Maneuverability Test to reflect the vessel's superior positioning. If failed, the adept suffers a –2 penalty to the maneuver's Failure Modifier to reflect the vessel's more vulnerable positioning. Boarding Action can only be used once per ship combat round.

BOUNCE

Talent: Avoid Blow
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

The adept reduces the impact of a fall by landing on the sturdiest parts of his body and rolling as he hits the ground. The adept subtracts his Avoid Blow Rank from the Falling Damage Test, reducing any damage he takes from the fall.

BRAIDING THREADS

Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept bypasses the Maximum Threads limitation of threaded items. For example, if an item has the characteristic "Maximum Threads: 2", Braiding threads allows more than two adepts to weave threads to the item without suffering the loss of the weakest thread that normally occurs, by combining their individual threads into one. All participating adepts must know the Braiding Threads knack and the Key Knowledge required to weave the Rank in question (or must have performed an item's Deed, as appropriate) and must weave the thread to the same Thread Rank at the same time. The Difficulty Number for the Thread Weaving Test is increased by +1 for each participating adept after the first, and every participating adept must succeed with their Thread Weaving Test and pay Legend Points. If successful, the threads woven are considered a single thread for the purpose of unweaving (***Player's Guide***, p. 120) or being displaced by newer threads (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 131). If one of the participating adepts loses his thread by dying, it fades out of the braided thread, leaving other braided threads intact. Using this knack does not circumvent restrictions that allow only the adept touching or actively using the item to benefit from it.

BY THE FINGERNAILS

Talent: Climbing
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 4

Should he fail a Climbing Test, the adept grabs for a handhold at the last second by making a second Climbing Test against the same Climbing Difficulty. If failed, he cannot attempt to use the knack again to save himself.

CALM HERD

Talent: Incite Stampede
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2

The adept calms a stampeding herd by making an Incite Stampede Test against the highest Social Defense among the stampeding animals. The herd's size determines the Result Level required (see p. 108). If successful, the animals calm down and the stampede stops.

CLAW RIPOSTE

Talent: Riposte
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 3

The adept can Riposte unarmed attacks, including animal and creature attacks.

CLAW TOOL

Talent: Claw Shape
Rank: 4 **Strain:** 2 per minute

The adept uses his claws to cut ropes, carve wood, climb, and perform other similar non-combat tasks. He gains a +2 bonus to Strength-only and Climbing Tests. The adept can revert his hands back to normal at any time.

COSMETICS

Talent: Fire Heal
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2 (see text)

The adept alters the effects of his Fire Heal talent to restore his physical appearance instead of healing damage. Instead of gaining one Recovery Test, the adept may remove one scar, wart, or other skin deformity. Several deformities may be removed in one go if several Recovery Tests are gained from Fire Heal. Cosmetics may be used with the **Heal Others** talent knack, p. 127; the Strain costs are combined.

COVET ITEM

Talent: Haggle
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 4

The adept convinces another character to strongly desire an item. This knack is used with the first Haggle Test the adept makes against the target's Social Defense. On a Good Result, the target feels a strong desire to purchase the item. Each successful Haggle Test that the adept makes thereafter adds +10 percent to the price the target is willing to pay, instead of +5 percent.

CREATE ORICHALCUM

Talent: Elementalism
Rank: 11 **Strain:** 2

The adept performs a ritual to create orichalcum. Create Orichalcum Tests are performed using the adept's Elementalism Step (see **Creating Orichalcum**, p. 161, for more information).

CREATE ARMORED MATRIX OBJECT

Talent: Thread Weaving (magicians only)
Rank: 12 **Strain:** 2

The adept creates an armored spell matrix object. Create Armored Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving Step (see **Enchanting**, p. 153, for more information).

CREATE COMMON MAGIC ITEM

Talent: Thread Weaving (magicians only)
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 2

The adept creates a common magic item. Create Common Magic Item Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving Step (see **Enchanting**, p. 153, for more information).

CREATE ENHANCED MATRIX OBJECT

Talent: Thread Weaving (magicians only)
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2

The adept creates an enhanced spell matrix object. Create Enhanced Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving Step (see **Enchanting**, p. 123, for more information).

CREATE SHARED MATRIX OBJECT

Talent: Thread Weaving (magicians only)
Rank: 15 **Strain:** 2

The adept creates a shared spell matrix object. Create Shared Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving Step (see **Enchanting**, p. 123, for more information).

CREATE SPELL MATRIX OBJECT

Talent: Thread Weaving (magicians only)
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 2

The adept creates a spell matrix object. Create Spell Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving Step (see **Enchanting**, p. 123, for more information).

CREATE THREAD ITEM

Talent: Thread Weaving (magicians only), Thread Smithing
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept creates a thread item. Create Thread Item Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving Step (see **Enchanting**, p. 123, for more information).

CREATURE REMAINS

Talent: Creature Analysis
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept identifies a creature from trace evidence, such as its remains, lair, or the remnants of victims, by studying the evidence, then making a Creature Analysis Test against the creature's Spell Defense. On a Good Result, he identifies the type of creature and may ask the gamemaster a question of a type normally granted by a successful use of the Creature Analysis talent.

DEATHBED

Talent: Dead Fall
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1 per minute

Illusion. The adept feigns the effects of a horrible disease or fatal injury, appearing as if he were dying, with a Good Result on his Dead Fall Test. He remains conscious and able to speak while maintaining the illusion, but at any time during the talent's duration may feign his own death, after which the effects of the Dead Fall talent work as normal.

DEATHSIGHT

Talent: Lifesight
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 3

The adept sees the strength and composition of undead Namegivers and Horror constructs with a Good Result on his Lifesight Test.

DEFLECT BLOW

Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 1

The adept achieves greater skill at defensive fighting. When using the Defensive Stance combat option, he can freely determine the bonus to Physical Defense, up to a bonus equal to his Melee Weapons Rank. The penalty to Action Tests is equal to the bonus to Physical Defense. For example, a character with a Melee Weapons Rank of 9 can receive a bonus ranging from +1 to +9, and receives a penalty from –1 to –9 as appropriate. Deflect Blow requires one use of the Melee Weapons talent in the round this knack is used, otherwise the adept suffers the penalty in the following round from overextending himself, without receiving the Defense bonus. The effects of this talent end immediately if the adept is disarmed.

DEFUSE MOB

Talent: Incite Mob
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2

The adept calms and disperses a mob by making an Incite Mob Test against the highest Social Defense among the mob's members. The mob's size determines the Result Level required (see p. 108). If successful, the mob returns to a calm state.

DIAGNOSE

Talent: Astral Sight
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept determines if a subject is afflicted with any diseases or internal injuries and checks the target's general state of health by making an Astral Sight Test against the target's Spell Defense. On a Good Result, he detects any injuries, diseases, poisons, illnesses, or other afflictions affecting the target.

DISASSOCIATE

Talent: Empathic Sense
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

The adept dampens a character's intense negative emotions by making an Empathic Sense Test against the target's Spell Defense. On a Good Result, the target's Attitude toward the adept improves by one level. The target still feels pain or anger or fear, but not as strongly as before. The gamemaster determines the effect of the target's new Attitude.

EXPLOSIVE FLAME ARROW

Talent: Flame Arrow
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 4

The adept creates an explosive ball of flame. If his missile Attack Test is successful, the flame arrow bursts on impact with a Flame Arrow Rank radius in yards (half this in hexes). The original target is affected as normal, but the Attack Test result is also

treated as an Attack Test against all other characters within the radius of the ball of flame. The Attack Test requires a Result Level one higher than normal against these secondary targets (usually a Good Result to hit, an Extraordinary Result to be an Armor-Defeating Hit); if successful, the secondary targets also take damage equal to the result of the Flame Arrow Test.

EXTEND RANGE

Talent: Long Shot
Rank: 10 **Strain:** 3

Instead of extending his weapon's maximum distance beyond Long Range, the adept extends the effective Short Range distance of his weapon to the maximum Long Range, suffering no Distance penalty to his Attack Test. Extend Range simply extends the Short Range into Long Range, it does not extend the Long Range. For example, a sling has a normal Short Range of 2–20 (1–10), but if Extend Range is used, it has an effective Short Range of 2–40 (1–20) and no Long Range.

FAR SPEAKING

Talent: Air Speaking
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept extends the range of his Air Speaking talent to Air Speaking Test×20 yards.

FAULTY BOWYER

Talent: Warp Missile
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 4

The adept makes a missile weapon useless instead of just reducing its Damage Step. He makes a Warp Missile Test, requiring an Extraordinary Result. If successful, the weapon's frame cracks, making it useless until repaired; see Repairing Damaged Weapons on p. 253 of the ***Player's Guide***, and treat the weapon's Damage Step as 1 for the purpose of determining repair cost and time.

FAULTY GOODS

Talent: Haggle
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

The adept gains the upper hand when haggling by convincing another character that that character's goods are of inferior quality. This knack is used with the first Haggle Test the adept makes against the target's Social Defense. On a Good Result, he points out illusory flaws in the goods, which make the target offer to sell the item for half its original price. Both adept and target make Haggle Tests as normal thereafter; the price decrease of 5% is determined as 5% of the item's new Cost, not the original Cost.

FAVORED MOUNT

Talent: Spirit Mount
Rank: 4 **Strain:** 2 (see text)

The adept summons a more individual Spirit Mount that always looks like and has the proportions of his favored mount animal. The adept must have bonded to an animal of that type in the past to choose it as his Favored Mount, and the adept must be able to ride the living animal of that type. For example, if it is a small mount like a zoak, a troll could not ride it. The Favored Mount uses the statistics of one of the animals listed on the Mounts Table of the ***Player's Guide*** (p. 272) and detailed in the **Creatures** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide***. Summoning a mount with a Flying Movement Rate or a weight expressed in tons causes 4 Strain. Favored Mount can be combined with Water Mount or Air Mount, in which case the Strain costs are cumulative.

FEINTING LUNGE

Talent: Trick Riding
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 3

An adept making a Charging Attack against an opponent declares that he is setting up his opponent to be struck by a designated companion. If his Attack Test is successful, he makes a Trick Riding Test against the opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, he does not add his mount's Strength Step to the Damage Test, but the designated companion adds the adept's Trick Riding Rank to his next Attack Test against the adept's opponent before the end of the following round.

FEINTING RETREAT

Talent: Trick Riding
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 3

An adept using Trick Riding to avoid an opponent's attack declares that he is setting up his assailant to run into one of his companion's blows. He takes the higher Strain cost and declares which companion gains a bonus before making his Trick Riding Test. The adept requires a Good Result on the Trick Riding Test. If successful, the designated companion adds the adept's Trick Riding Rank to his next Attack Test against the adept's opponent before the end of the following round.

FIRE ARROW

Talent: Flame Arrow
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 1

The head of an arrow or bolt is engulfed in flame. Instead of making a Flame Arrow Test, the adept gains a +2 bonus to the missile's normal Damage Test. The missile is not consumed by fire and the adept need not spend Karma for using the Flame Arrow talent. The Fire Arrow knack is often used to create flaming missiles to ignite flammable materials from afar.

Flaming Wounds

Talent: Fireblood
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 3

The adept seals wounds shut by making a Fireblood Test against his Wound Threshold. If successful, blood erupts like fire from one Wound that he has received during the current battle, sealing it shut and healing it, but recovering no Damage Points.

Flying Kick

Talent: Great Leap
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept makes a flying kick, using his Great Leap Test as an unarmed Attack Test against an opponent more than 2 yards (1 hex) away. On a Good Result, he strikes his opponent, making a Damage Test using his Strength Step+3. The Great Leap Test determines the maximum distance he leaps, as normal, and serves as the adept's Physical Defense for the remainder of the round, even if lower than his normal Physical Defense. If the adept's Great Leap Test is not high enough to cover the distance to his opponent, he misses.

Forge Arrow

Talent: Forge Weapon
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 2

The adept enhances the damage inflicted by arrows, bolts, and other projectiles. He may forge a number of individual missiles of the same type equal to his Forge Weapon Rank. To determine the Difficulty Number, unforged missiles are considered to have a Size equal to the weapon from which they are fired and a Damage Step of 1. The adept makes a Forge Weapon Test as normal. If successful, the missile adds a +1 bonus to the weapon's Damage Step when fired. All standard restrictions and limitations for forging weapons also apply to forging missiles.

Gaping Wounds

Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

Illusion. The magician creates the illusion that a Wound caused by a spell that inflicts damage is far worse than it truly is. He makes a Spellcasting Test as normal. If the spell's Effect Test inflicts a Wound on the target, it appears more severe than it should, allowing the magician to make an immediate Intimidation Test against the target's Social Defense (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93).

Glide

Talent: Wind Catcher
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2

The adept can travel farther when using Wind Catcher. Instead of being allowed to move as far horizontally as vertically, he can now move three times as far horizontally as he moves vertically. For example, an adept using Wind Catcher to fall a distance of 20 yards can now land 60 yards away from where he would have landed if falling straight down.

Ghost Master Ritual

Talent: Thread Weaving (see text)
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 0

Unique to each Discipline. The adept summons the ghost of a practitioner of his Discipline as a trainer for Circle advancement. See **Ghost Masters**, p. 10, for more information. Unlike other Thread Weaving talent knacks available to all types of Thread

Weaving, the Ghost Master Ritual talent knack is specific to the Thread Weaving talent of each Discipline, as the ritual to be performed differs, and if the knack is learned from a tutor, the tutor must follow that Discipline. For example, an adept who is a Warrior and Archer must learn this talent knack twice, once from a Warrior tutor and once from an Archer tutor, to be able to summon a ghost master for both Disciplines.

Halt Disease

Talent: Cold Purify
Rank: 6 **Strain:** 2

The adept stops the progress of disease by making a Cold Purify Test against the disease's Spell Defense. On a Good Result, the effect of the disease is halted. The victim does not heal any damage already inflicted; the knack merely prevents the disease ravaging him further.

Hard Glare

Talent: Steely Stare
Rank: 10 **Strain:** 4

The adept damages an inanimate object with his gaze by making a Steely Stare (13) Test. If successful, delicate objects made of glass, crystal, pottery, or thin wood break with a glance. An Average Result is enough to crack glass or crystal; shattering wooden or ceramic objects requires an Excellent Result. The gamemaster determines if an object is delicate enough to be affected by this knack.

Head Butt

Talent: Unarmed Combat
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

While maintaining a grappling hold, the adept may try to stun his opponent by making an Unarmed Combat Test as a special Attack Test. If successful, the target is Stunned (***Player's Guide***, p. 228) for one round per Result Level, starting with a Good Result. On a Pathetic Result, the adept himself is Stunned for one round—he strikes a vulnerable part of his own head.

HEAL OTHERS

Talent: Fire Heal
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1+ (see text)

The adept guides another character through the Fire Heal ritual. The procedure for gaining bonus Recovery Tests is as described for the Fire Heal talent (***Player's Guide***, p. 69), but the adept must achieve a Good Result on his Fire Heal Test for the ritual to be successful. The adept does not himself gain any Recovery Tests, but as he must take part in the ritual he is still exposed to the risks. If failed, both characters take Damage and Wounds. Using this knack causes the adept Strain equal to the number of bonus Recovery Tests the other character is attempting to gain.

HOLD MULTIPLE THREADS

Talent: Hold Thread
Rank: 10 **Strain:** 2+ (see text)

The magician can hold multiple spell threads with his Hold Thread talent. He weaves the threads and makes a Hold Thread Test as normal, but is not limited to holding only one thread. For every thread he attempts to hold, including the first, he takes 2 Strain. If the Hold Thread Test is successful, the threads are held as normal.

HORROR ANALYSIS

Talent: Creature Analysis
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 1

This knack extends use of the Creature Analysis talent to include Horrors, Horror constructs, and the remains of Horrors and their victims. Though Horrors are rarely exactly alike—and often capable of elaborate deception—legendary heroes have occasionally found weaknesses to exploit in the physiology or habits of Horrors they have stalked and watched. The adept must achieve a Good Result on his Creature Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the Horror or construct being analyzed.

IDENTIFY TRACKS

Talent: Tracking
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept determines the composition of a group he is tracking by making a Tracking Test. On a Good Result, he learns the exact number of members and the distinct races that make up the target group. An Excellent Result or better may provide the adept with even more information, at the gamemaster's discretion.

IMPROVISED MISSILES

Talent: Throwing Weapons
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1

The adept uses an object no bigger than twelve inches long as a throwing weapon. He does not incur a penalty to his Attack Test when hurling the improvised missile (***Player's Guide***, p. 232), but he must be able to lift the object. The adept makes a Throwing Weapons Test, as normal. If successful, the gamemaster determines the Damage Step of the improvised missile—most objects are Damage Step 1, but some larger or heavier objects may be Damage Step 2 or even 3. Objects hurled using this knack have the same range as a dagger (***Player's Guide***, p. 232).

IMPROVISED WEAPONS

Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1

The adept wields an object not intended as a weapon in melee combat. He does not incur a penalty to his Attack Test when hitting an opponent with the improvised weapon (***Player's Guide***, p. 230). The adept makes a Melee Weapons Test, as normal. If successful, the gamemaster determines the Damage Step of the improvised weapon, based on the item's size and materials, to a maximum of Damage Step 7. Examples of suitable items include pens, pieces of wood, airship guide cables, uprooted marker stones, loaves of stale bread, suits of armor, or even other Namegivers. The adept must be able to carry the item to wield it as a melee weapon.

LASTING DECEIT

Talent: False Sight
Rank: 12 **Strain:** 6

The adept prolongs the Duration of an Illusion spell through use of the False Sight talent. The adept must spend a Karma Point when using this knack. Lasting Deceit must be used before the spell is cast. If the casting is successful, the spell's Duration is extended by the adept's False Sight Rank in the same time units the spell uses. For example, a spell lasting Rank minutes lasts Rank + 14 minutes for an adept with a False Sight Rank of 14.

LIAR

Talent: Detect Falsehood
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 1

The adept spends a Karma Point to construct an elaborate lie engineered to work well against a specific character. He makes a Detect Falsehood Test, but instead of analyzing if the target lies, he discovers weaknesses in the target's capability of Insight. He gains a +1 bonus per Result Level achieved, starting with a Good Result, to his Interaction Test against the target, as long as they relate to the lie the adept tells.

LIFT THE CURTAIN

Talent: Astral Sight
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 1 per minute

The adept reveals astral space to other characters by making an Astral Sight Test against a base Difficulty Number of 6, modified by the level of astral corruption (***Player's Guide***, p. 111). If successful, a small portion of astral space 4 yards (2 hexes) in diameter within the adept's Astral Sight range becomes visible to those watching.

MIGHTY THROW

Talent: Unarmed Combat
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2

The adept grabs an opponent and throws him through the air by making an Unarmed Combat Test. The Unarmed Combat Test requires a Good Result and, if successful, instead of causing normal damage, the adept throws his opponent up to a number of hexes equal to the Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result (twice this distance in yards). If another target is within the line of flight, this opponent is hit if the Unarmed Combat Test is

also successful against his Physical Defense, although this second opponent is entitled to evade the Attack by abilities such as Avoid Blow or Spirit Dodge, but not abilities such as Parry or Riposte. The thrown opponent, as well as the opponent hit by the thrown opponent, suffer Damage equal to a Strength Test made by the adept. They then must succeed at a Knockdown Test against the result of the Strength Test or be Knocked Down.

Mimic Music

Talent: Mimic Voice
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2

The adept mimics the sound of a musical instrument in the same way as mimicking a voice, except he makes a Mimic Voice Test against the higher Spell Defense of the instrument or the person playing it to learn the "voice." If successful, he may mimic the instrument at any time for a number of months equal to his Mimic Voice Rank. When performing music using this knack, the adept makes a Mimic Voice Test to determine the quality of his performance. If used in conjunction with the Emotion Song talent (and associated knacks), he gains a +1 bonus to his Emotion Song Test for each Result Level achieved on the Mimic Voice Test.

Mind Trick

Talent: Mind Wave
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 1

The adept spends a Karma Point to make a character follow a simple one- or two-word order and makes a Mind Wave Test. On a Good Result, the target follows the command for the duration of the talent. The target remains unaware that someone else is controlling his actions until the talent ends. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Mind Wave Step to end the effect. The adept must stay within Mind Wave Rank × 2 yards (Rank hexes), or the effect ends.

Mold Spirit

Talent: Summon
Rank: 11 **Strain:** 2

The magician strengthens or weakens a spirit's connection to its native plane by spending 1 Karma Point and making a Summoning Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, the spirit incurs a +1 bonus or –1 penalty (at the magician's choice) per Result Level achieved to all of its Action Tests, until it returns to its native netherworld. A spirit can only be affected by one use of this talent knack at a time.

Mountain Hoof

Talent: Trick Riding
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2 per round (see text)

The adept may safely ride his mount at extremely steep angles, up to a 60-degree slope. Both rider and mount take the Strain cost. The mount cannot be carrying more weight than its Carrying Capacity allows, including the rider, and cannot drag anything behind it while traversing the slope.

Name Spell

Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 1+ (see text)

The magician may cast Named spells. The Strain cost varies, based on the spell's Circle. See **Named Spells**, p. 132, and **Creating Permanent Spell Patterns**, p. 158, for more information.

Nether Sextant

Talent: Bone Compass
Rank: 12 **Strain:** 3

Instead of detecting a True Pattern, the adept detects gateways to a specific Netherworld he has previously visited, provided a gateway to the Netherworld is within Bone Compass Rank Miles.

Offguard

Talent: Picking Pockets
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 4

The adept distracts a target while picking his pockets, making it harder for the theft to be noticed. After making his initial Picking Pockets Test, the adept makes another Picking Pockets Test, using the Offguard knack, against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target automatically fails to notice the theft. The same does not apply to onlookers, however.

Orbiting Watcher

Talent: Orbiting Spy
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 1

The adept places a spy spirit to watch a place, item, or being. He makes an Orbiting Spy Test to summon the spirit, as normal, and then makes a second Orbiting Spy Test against the Spell Defense of the place, item, or being to be watched. If successful, the spy spirit remains with the target for the duration of the talent. The spirit can communicate with the adept up to a distance of Orbiting Spy Rank miles.

Photographic Memory

Talent: Book Memory
Rank: 10 **Strain:** 3

The adept remembers the exact details of a place, up to Book Memory Rank in yards in every direction. He makes a Book Memory Test against the highest Spell Defense of any item or character (or the place itself) in the area. If successful, the adept successfully memorizes the details of the place. The place counts as one book for the purpose of the Book Memory talent, but of course cannot be transcribed as a piece of text could be. Like looking up a memorized book, the adept can envision the place in his mind's eye, allowing him to use the Evidence Analysis talent to ask questions about the scene, or just examine details at his leisure.

Pin Down

Talent: Unarmed Combat
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept more effectively grapples and holds down a Knocked Down opponent. If the adept makes a successful Grappling attack against his opponent using the Pin Down knack (see Grappling, p. 230 of the ***Player's Guide***), he is not considered Knocked Down himself (although he is more easily Blindsided as he is not able to turn away from the opponent without breaking the lock). The adept can maintain the grapple as normal.

Pin Up

Talent: Throwing Weapons
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2

The adept pins a character to a nearby wall or other structure with a thrown weapon. The target must be within 2 yards (1 hex) of a structure or wall and wearing clothing that can be suitably pinned. The adept must use a weapon that can feasibly pin someone, such as a dagger, knife, or spear, and makes a Throwing Weapons

Test against the target's Physical Defense. On a Good Result, the weapon pins the target's clothing to the wall. The adept does not make a Damage Test. Instead, the target can only free himself by making a successful Strength Test against the attack's Damage Step. While pinned the target is Harried.

PLACED SHOT

Talent: Missile Weapons
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2 per attack

The adept may declare and use the Aggressive Attack combat option with a missile weapon. His Movement Rate is reduced to 2 yards (1 hex) that round, but the adept gains the benefits (and penalties) of a normal Aggressive Attack for each Attack Test with a missile weapon he makes, the first of which must be made with the Missile Weapons talent. The knack's Strain cost includes the Strain cost of the Aggressive Attack.

PLACED THROW

Talent: Throwing Weapons
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2 per attack

The adept may declare and use the Aggressive Attack combat option with a thrown weapon. His Movement Rate is reduced to 2 yards (1 hex) that round, but the adept gains the benefits (and penalties) of a normal Aggressive Attack for each Attack Test with a throwing weapon he makes, the first of which must be with the Throwing Weapons talent. The knack's Strain cost includes the Strain cost of the Aggressive Attack.

POISONED INFLUENCE

Talent: Diplomacy
Rank: 6 **Strain:** 1

Instead of improving the target negotiator's Attitude towards his opponent, the adept worsens it upon a successful Diplomacy Test.

RAPIER WIT

Talent: Resist Taunt
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

Whenever the adept is the target of a successful Taunt, he may counter the taunt with a witty verbal riposte by making a Resist Taunt Test. On a Good Result, the character making the original taunt himself suffers the results of the taunt. This knack can only be attempted once per taunt.

REMEMBER CONVERSATION

Talent: Book Memory
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

The adept remembers a conversation for later recall by making a Book Memory Test against the highest Spell Defense among all the speakers conversing. If successful, the adept successfully memorizes the conversation. A memorized conversation can last up to Book Memory Rank hours and counts as one book for the purpose of the Book Memory talent.

SECOND RIPOSTE

Talent: Second Weapon
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 4

Having failed a Riposte Test, the adept may attempt a second riposte against the same melee attack if using an off-hand weapon, by making a Second Weapon Test, treating it as if it were a Riposte Test (using the rules of the Riposte talent).

SETUP

Talent: Maneuver
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 1

The adept maneuvers into a position to aid an ally, whom he chooses when he makes his Maneuver Test. Both adept and ally must avoid all attacks made against them by the target opponent until the ally's turn in the following round. If they succeed, the ally gains the normal bonuses Maneuver conveys, instead of the adept.

SHADOW HIDE

Talent: Silent Walk
Rank: 4 **Strain:** 1

The adept not only moves quietly, but also conceals himself in the nearby shadows. His Silent Walk Test determines the Detection Difficulty for Perception Tests made to hear or see him move. During this time the adept may move no faster than half his Movement Rate without ending the talent. The adept requires some shadow to hide in—Partial darkness is ideal, but any shadow is enough for him to use. The complete absence of shadow, such as being in bright light or the effect of some light spells, prevents the knack from being used and ends the effect.

SHARE SENSE

Talent: Borrow Sense
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept "swaps" senses with another animal by making a Borrow Sense Test. If successful, he receives one of the target animal's senses—sight, smell, hearing, touch, or taste—in addition to his own, and the animal receives the adept's corresponding sense in return.

SIGNATURE SPELLS

Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1

The magician alters (but does not eliminate) the cosmetic effects of his own spells, such as color, smell, and sound. For example, he could change the blast effect of his Bouncing Blaster spell from orange to green or superimpose the sound of booming laughter over the explosion. The knack cannot change a spell's statistics or its required components, it simply allows the magician to customize the "style" of the spell to make it more his own.

Smooth Armor

Talent: Forge Armor
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 4

The adept reduces the Initiative Penalty of a suit of armor or a shield instead of increasing its Armor Rating. Smooth Armor has the same requirements and Difficulty Number as increasing an Armor Rating per the normal rules for Forge Armor. Decreasing the Initiative Penalty by 1 is treated as increasing the Physical Armor Rating by 1, however, for the purpose of determining the number of increases in Physical Armor Rating allowed. An Initiative Penalty cannot be reduced by more than half (rounded up) using Smooth Armor. The maximum Mystic Armor Rating is not affected by Smooth Armor.

Chain Mail armor has a Physical Armor Rating of 7, which can normally be increased by 4 (half the original value, rounded up) to a maximum of 11. If Smooth Armor is used to remove the Initiative Penalty by 1, it counts as one increase in Physical Armor. For the next attempt at Forge Armor to increase Physical Armor, the Difficulty Number is determined as if the Physical Armor Rating were 8. The maximum Physical Armor Rating that can be achieved for the hide armor is now 10 (the maximum value of 11 is "used up" by the reduction in Initiative Penalty). Smooth Armor can only be used on Chain Mail armor twice, (half its original penalty, rounded up).

Spell Stacking

Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: 10 **Strain:** 2+ (see text)

The magician may "stack" multiple spells to cast them as a single spell against a character. He takes 2 Strain for each spell in the stack. If the spell patterns to be stacked are stored in spell matrices, the magician first weaves any required spell threads for all the spells, then makes a single Spellcasting Test against the highest Casting Difficulty among the spells, +1 for each additional spell. On a Good Result, the spells are cast successfully against the target with normal effect. The magician makes a separate Effect Test for each spell that requires it. If a magician wishes to stack spells that are not stored in matrices, he may cast them using raw magic (***Player's Guide***, p. 136), but with the following modification: the gamemaster makes one Warping Test and one Horror Mark Test, but combines the Circles of all of the spells in the stack to determine the "stacked" spell's effective Circle.

Spirit Flame

Talent: Flame Arrow
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 4

The adept's flame arrow bypasses physical protection. The adept makes a missile Attack Test as normal. On an Average Result, the target's Physical Armor protects him as normal. On a Good Result, the target's Mystic Armor provides protection instead. Armor-Defeating Hits bypass the target's armor as normal.

Swab the Deck

Talent: Air Sailing
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 1

When fighting aboard an airship, the adept makes use of his surroundings to gain combat advantage. He makes an Air Sailing Test against his opponent's Social Defense as a Standard Action. On a Good Result, he uses his knowledge of the ship's layout to his advantage, tricking his opponent into dangerous positions. For Air Sailing Rank rounds, the opponent reduced his Movement Rate by 1 and increases the Difficulty Number of any Knockdown Tests he makes by +3, as he is constantly in danger of tripping over coiled ropes, barrels, or similar obstacles.

Swift Hoof

Talent: Trick Riding
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 1 (see text)

The adept goads his mount to increased speed. He spends a Karma Point, but does not make a Trick Riding Test. His mount's Movement Rate is increased by a number of hexes equal to the Trick Riding Rank. This is treated as if the mount used the Sprint talent (the mount cannot use Great Leap, the bonus is not doubled when using Running, and so on). The mount also takes the Strain, rather than the rider.

Swinging Move

Talent: Climbing
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 0+ (see text)

The adept makes Climbing Tests to travel distances by swinging from ropes or vines, such as an airship's rigging or a chandelier. When covering a distance up to his Movement Rate, the adept makes a Climbing (8) Test; when swinging up to double his Movement Rate, he makes a Climbing (12) Test and takes 1 Strain. The attempt counts as his move for the round. A successful Climbing Test means the adept swings and lands where he wants, while failure means the adept botches his landing and is Knocked Down. A Pathetic Result means the adept loses his grip mid-air and takes Falling Damage.

Talent Linking

Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 2+ (see text)

The adept weaves a temporary thread to a target's talent, increasing its Rank. The target must be of the same Discipline as the adept, and the adept must have learned the talent he intends to enhance for the target. The adept makes a Thread Weaving Test against the target's Talent Step. For each Result Level achieved on this test, starting with an Average Result, the target receives a +1 Rank bonus to the talent. The bonus lasts until the end of the following round, but the adept can extend the duration each round by taking another 1 Strain as a Standard Action, up to a number of rounds equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. A target can only have a talent enhanced by up to three adepts, although he can have more than one talent enhanced.

When performing ritual magic, which requires more time than Talent Linking allows, the adept may grant the enhancement for longer periods. By taking 2 Blood Magic Damage that lasts a year and a day instead of the initial 2 Strain, the enhancement is active for a number of days equal to the Thread Weaving Rank. Instead of maintaining the enhancement, the adept takes another 2 Blood Magic Damage every time the enhanced talent is used for a Talent Test.

Talent Pattern

Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 13 **Strain:** 2

The adept weaves a temporary astral filter allowing him to channel raw magical energy into his pattern, enhancing one of his Talent Ranks. He chooses one of his talents and makes a Thread Weaving Test against the Talent Rank, spending a Karma Point. For every Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result, he gains a +1 Rank bonus to that talent for a number of rounds equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. Any one talent can only benefit from one use of Talent Pattern at a time.

TELLING THE TALE

Talent: Emotion Song
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 0

The adept expands his repertoire for use with the Emotion Song talent. Instead of singing, he can perform any artistic activity, such as storytelling, reciting of poetry, or even performing a puppet show.

THREAD MASKING

Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2

The adept increases the difficulty of detecting and identifying a permanent (not spell) thread he has woven. When using Thread Masking, the character requires a Result Level one higher (usually a Good Result) for the Thread Weaving Test to be successful. Any attempts to identify the thread add the adept's Thread Weaving Rank to their Difficulty Number. This talent knack is only relevant when the Detecting Threads optional rule (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion*** for details) is used.

TRACELESS STRIDE

Talent: Silent Walk
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 1

Traceless Stride allows the adept to not leave any footprints while using Silent Walk on any surface. Once used, the effect lasts for Silent Walk Rank rounds, but ends if the adept stops using the talent.

TRANSLATOR

Talent: Spirit Talk
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 1 per minute

The adept makes a Spirit Talk Test against the summoned spirit's Spell Defense. On a Good Result, the spirit is able to talk in any language known to the adept, allowing bystanders to listen to and interact with the conversation. If the spirit is unable to communicate verbally, this knack has no effect.

UNRAVELING

Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 2+ (see text)

The adept "unweaves" a spell pattern, pulling it apart and ending the spell. Spell patterns can be unraveled this way because of their fragile and fairly delicate nature. This knack is commonly learned and used by non-magician adepts who do not have access to the Dispel Magic spell, as well as by those adepts who often deal with hostile spells and magic (such as Thieves and Weaponsmiths). The pattern must be seen clearly, using some form of astral perception ability, to unravel it. The adept makes a separate Thread Weaving Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty for each thread required by the spell. If the spell does not require any threads, this step is ignored. Each Thread Weaving Test causes 2 Strain. Once the adept has unraveled the spell's threads (if any), he takes another 2 Strain and makes a final Thread Weaving Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty. If successful, the spell is broken and dispelled. If failed, the core of the spell remains intact and it continues unaffected. If the adept fails to completely unravel a spell he cannot attempt to unravel that same spell again that day, unless he spends a Recovery Test for each additional attempt. This knack can be used only on complete spell patterns, not on patterns in the process of being formed. Thus, an adept cannot unravel the threads woven by a magician in the process of casting a spell. The knack can affect Named spells only if the adept has studied the spell's True Pattern and knows its Key Knowledges (see **Dispelling Named Spells**, p. 133).

WATER MOUNT

Talent: Spirit Mount
Rank: 11 **Strain:** 4

The adept's spirit mount gains the ability to move across the surface of a body of water, traveling at the same Movement Rates it uses while on land. The Water Mount needs a Good Result to be summoned.

WEAVE ELEMENT

Talent: Elementalism
Rank: 5 **Strain:** 2

The adept infuses an item with the essence of one or more of the five True Elements (earth, air, fire, water, and wood). Weave Element Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving Step. See **Enchanting**, p. 157, for more information.

WEAPON SMASH

Talent: Momentum Attack
Rank: 9 **Strain:** 2

When using Weapon Smash on a Momentum Attack Test and achieving an Armor-Defeating Hit, the adept smashes his weapon, shield, or fist into his opponent, causing an intimidating sound. The adept may immediately make a Battle Shout Test against the opponent, even if he has already made a Battle Shout Test that round. Targets are only affected by one use of Battle Shout, as normal, however.

WHISPERED CONVERSATION

Talent: Air Speaking
Rank: 7 **Strain:** 1

The adept makes an Air Speaking Test against the Spell Defense of a target no more than Air Speaking Rank × 4 yards (Rank × 2 hexes) away. If successful, only the target hears the adept speaking. A Whispered Conversation lasts minutes instead of hours.

WOUND HEAL

Talent: Fire Heal
Rank: 6 **Strain:** 2 (see text)

The adept heals a Wound instead of instead of gaining Recovery Tests with his Fire Heal ritual. Only one Wound may be healed per use, and the ritual takes one hour. The adept makes a Fire Heal Test against a Step 8 Fire Intensity Test. If successful, he immediately heals one Wound. If failed, the adept suffers the normal consequences of a failed Fire Heal Test (***Player's Guide***, p. 69). An adept who also knows the Heal Others knack can use the Wound Heal knack to heal one Wound suffered by another character instead of giving him a Recovery Test. If failed, both characters are affected, as noted in the **Heal Others** knack description, p. 127.

WOUND SHARE

Talent: Blood Share
Rank: 8 **Strain:** 4

The adept makes a Blood Share Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, one Wound may be transferred between the adept and the target, instead of transferring Damage Points. The Wound transferred to the new character or creature appears in a similar location to the original Wound, and this does not require a Knockdown Test.

CHAPTER TWENTY

SPELLS

Sir, you look at me as if I were Horror-marked. Do you think I am the scion of some creature from the netherworlds? Curb your fear. All I desire is a tankard of your finest ale.

• Caelarion, Elven Nethermancer •

This chapter offers new spells for the four magician Disciplines introduced in the ***Player's Guide***: the Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, and Wizard. These spells are of greater potency than those from the ***Player's Guide***, covering the Warden and Master Discipline Status Levels, but are learned, cast, and otherwise utilized using the rules presented in the **Spells** chapter of the ***Player's Guide***.

In addition, rules for Naming spells and dealing with Named spells (these are cast using the **Name Spell** talent knack, p. 128) and special rules for learning and using high-Circle spells are introduced.

NAMED SPELLS

One of the first truths that an apprentice magician learns from his master is that the power of spell magic is transient. Spells enable a magician to draw energy from astral space and shape it to suit his will, but the effects of even the most powerful spells rarely last more than a short time. Spells generally create no more than a tiny, brief change in the fabric of the universe before the universe inevitably reverts to its natural state. Blood magic can prolong the duration of magical effects, but even a few years represent no more than a fleeting moment in the life span of the universe. By Naming a spell a magician can give the spell a True pattern and make its effects permanent and self-sustaining. Naming a spell allows a magician to cast lasting curses and blessings, create magical items, and design unique, high-powered spells.

Only spells with a duration longer than 1 round can be Named. Spells that destroy or consume their targets, such as Razor Orb, cannot be Named because their effects are temporary by definition—these spells end after they have destroyed their targets. Magicians may, however, Name warding or defensive spells, such as Lightning Shield or Pass Ward, because destroying a target is not the primary function of these spells. Naming spells is powerful magic, and each gamemaster should determine which spells can be Named in his game.

Jens' gamemaster has ruled that spells involving the summoning of spirits cannot be Named. Belgaras, Jens' troll Nethermancer, can never make the effects of his Pocket Guardian spell permanent. Because the Pocket Guardian spell allows Belgaras to summon a small tasked spirit to protect his bag, it falls into the category of summoning spells, and therefore cannot be Named.

CASTING NAMED SPELLS

Magicians wishing to cast Named spells must first learn the Name Spell talent knack (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 128). Once the magician has learned this knack, he can cast Named spells.

To make a spell's effect permanent, the magician must give the spell a Name. A spell's Name is usually associated with the circumstances under which the caster wishes to make the spell permanent. If the magician uses a spell to enchant an item, the spell's Name generally includes the name of the item. If the spell is targeted against a person, the Name may indicate the caster, the target, and the circumstances of the casting.

Enitharmon, an elven Illusionist, casts the Eyes Have It spell on an opponent and decides to make the spell permanent. He chooses to Name the spell Enitharmon's Curse of Blindness.

Before attempting to cast a permanent spell, a magician must declare his intention to do so and must accept whatever results the Spellcasting and Effect Tests produce. The magician may change his mind and decide not to make the spell permanent if he is unhappy with the results. In this case, he takes Strain damage as described below, but need not spend any Legend Points.

To cast a Named spell, a magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spell's Casting Difficulty, as normal. If the test succeeds, the magician makes a second Spellcasting Test against the higher of the spell's Casting or Dispel Difficulty, and takes Strain damage equal to the Spell Circle plus a single Blood Wound (see the ***Player's Guide***, p. 123). As long as the Strain does not kill the magician, the spellcasting attempt will succeed on a Good result. If the test succeeds, the magician may make the spell permanent by spending Legend Points; if he chooses not to do so, the spell simply works as normal.

The Named spell costs as much as a Warden (Circle 9–12) talent on the Talent Rank Cost Table, with the Spell Circle being used in place of the Talent Rank. If the caster has insufficient Current Legend Points, which provide the magical energy needed to create a True pattern for the spell, he cannot make the spell permanent. For example, casting a Fifth Circle spell as a Named spell would cost the magician 2,100 Legend Points, the same Legend Point cost as a Warden (Circle 9–12) talent at Rank 5.

Once a magician makes a spell permanent, the spell becomes an independent astral entity outside his control. Even the magician who created a Named spell must dispel or destroy the Named spell he wants to cancel—he cannot simply cancel it at will, even if this option is available to him if the spell was cast normally.

The effects of certain spells, such as Monstrous Mantle and Shield Mist, may prove inconvenient if made permanent. Such a spell will become "fixed" by Naming it. If characters insist on Naming such spells anyway, the gamemaster is encouraged to enforce any potential problems they cause.

Dispelling Named Spells

The Thread Weaving talent knack Unraveling (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p.131) and the Dispel Magic spell are the only effective means to destroy a Named spell (short of destroying its target). To use either of these methods, a magician must learn the Key Knowledges of the Named spell. The typical number of Key Knowledges for a Named spell is based on the spell's Circle, as shown on the Named Spell Key Knowledges Table.

NAMED SPELL KEY KNOWLEDGES TABLE

Spell Circle	Number of Key Knowledges
1–4	1
5–8	2
9–12	3
13–15	4

The Key Knowledges may vary but generally include the spell's Name, the Name of the magician who cast the spell, the reason for the spell, the spell's history, and similar information. The gamemaster may create Key Knowledges if the need arises, and may include a Deed if so desired.

Learning the Key Knowledges of a Named spell is generally more difficult than learning the Key Knowledges of a magical item, as there is no physical object on which to use the Item or Weapon History talent (except if the spell is cast upon an object). As a result, magicians often use mundane research to learn the Key Knowledges of a Named spell. Once a magician has learned the Key Knowledges of a Named spell, he can break it by using the Unraveling talent knack or the Dispel Magic spell.

Named Spells as Magic Items

While a spell Named on an item has effects similar or even identical to those of a magic item, such an item is not considered to be an enchanted item as per the **Enchanting** rules (p. 153), nor is Naming a spell considered enchanting. Items produced by enchanting are powered using magical materials and their effects cannot be dispelled, while Named spells are powered by the energy of the caster's Legend Points, and can be dispelled. Enchanting and Naming spells are two different methods of creating an item with magical properties, and are treated differently under certain circumstances.

High-Circle Spells

Unlike the formulaic lower-Circle spells, each spell of Thirteenth Circle and greater is a unique and special enchantment. These extremely powerful rituals are designed to create specific effects of great scope and importance, and are often the basis of legends.

Though all spells of Thirteenth Circle and greater are different, they all possess three characteristics. Each is a unique Named ritual spell, is difficult to learn, and difficult to cast. Each of these spells has a specific purpose and intent and may only be used for that purpose. For example, there is no such thing as a Thirteenth Circle attack spell that can be used to instantly destroy any target the magician chooses. However, a magician could create a Thirteenth Circle spell intended to visit a terrible plague on a specific city.

Because each high-Circle spell has a unique effect and a unique target, gamemasters and players should view their use as significant events that can easily alter the course of a campaign. Each high-Circle spell has a Name, and therefore a True pattern that defines the spell's purpose. Because they are Named, dispelling high-Circle spells is a major task that requires the discovery of several Key Knowledges (see **Named Spells**, p. 132). For example, the Ritual of Thorns is the enchantment that created the Blood Elves. Its creation and use was a specific event in the history of the Wyrm Wood. The Ritual probably will never be used again, but if it is, that use will be an equally significant event in the history of Barsaive.

Part of the power of these high-Circle spells comes from the fact that they are Named. However, this is slightly different than the process of casting a spell using the Name Spell talent knack. The Name Spell talent knack does more than just Name the spell: it provides permanence through the use of Blood Magic and the investiture of Legend Points. High-Circle spells may also be cast using the Name Spell talent knack, following all the rules for doing so (see **Named Spells**, p. 132). If cast normally, they do not cost Strain or Legend Points, but are also not permanent.

Magicians need to consider two important factors when designing spells of Thirteenth Circle and higher. First, the design must reflect the spell's unique purpose; the magician must define the spell's effect more specifically than he would define the effect of a lower-Circle spell. While the effects are not as flexible as those of lower-Circle spells, they can and should produce far-reaching effects. High-Circle spells may produce more than one effect, reach long distances or cover large areas of effect. For example, such spells might include a ritual that causes all the adult males in the city of Travar to fall ill and die, or a spell that would transform Lake Ban into ice. Second, high-Circle spells must be designed as ritual spells. Because high-Circle spells are so powerful, they should be difficult to learn and cast. Their complexity gives only the most highly skilled and talented magicians a hope of designing and executing them. High-Circle spells represent magical secrets of the highest order, and only years of devoted work enable magicians to successfully create them. These spells are as carefully guarded as the most valuable of magical treasures, and they are not shared or used lightly. Thirteenth Circle and greater spells contain enough power to alter the course of an **Earthdawn** campaign with only one use.

Gamemasters should carefully consider the implications of these spells before allowing their use in campaigns.

Some examples of Thirteenth or higher Circle spells are included in this book; others may be found in dusty grimoires that await discovery in abandoned kaers. While these may presented in a generic fashion, keep in mind that they merely serve as ideas and must still be created or found with a single specific purpose in mind. For example, the City in a Bottle spell is a different spell if targeted against a different city and must be designed and learned as such.

Discipline Spell Lists

Each of the magician Disciplines comes with its own list of spells. Not all spells are available to all followers of each Discipline. Some spells are more common than others, subject to the gamemaster's discretion. The following lists show to which Disciplines each spell is typically available, as well as the spell Circle.

Elementalism Spells

Elementalists use their magic to manipulate the magical elements. Elementalism spells most often affect one or more elements, but can also also affect the weather and nature. Through their spells, they are able to speak with the elemental spirits that inhabit the world.

Ninth Circle
- Burning Water (p. 137)
- Cloud Banish (p. 138)
- Cold Embers (p. 139)
- Dragon's Breath (p. 141)
- Fire Wall (p. 143)
- Moon Shadow (p. 146)
- Water Wall (p. 152)

Tenth Circle
- Air Fortress (p. 135)
- Earth and Air (p. 142)
- Elemental Merchant (p. 142)
- Fire and Water (p. 143)
- Frozen Harbor (p. 144)
- Petrify (p. 147)
- Weather Change (p. 152)

Eleventh Circle
- Wood Blade (p. 152)

Twelfth Circle
- Crop Blight (p. 139)

Fourteenth Circle
- Council of the Forest (p. 139)

Fifteenth Circle
- Call Forth the Maelstrom (p. 137)
- Purify Forest (p. 147)

Illusionism Spells

The Illusionist works with deception magic, casting spells that create things which are not what they seem. Sometimes he takes the unreal and gives it the appearance of reality. Other times he uses real effects to deceive or throw opponents off-guard.

Ninth Circle
- Do Unto Others (p. 140)
- Grim Reaper (p. 145)
- One of the Crowd (p. 146)
- Revulsion (p. 148)
- Shift Walls (p. 149)
- Thundering Walls (p. 150)

Tenth Circle
- Afterlife (p. 135)
- Astral Materialization (p. 136)
- Eclipse (p. 142)
- Eternal Day (p. 143)
- Haunted House (p. 145)

Thirteenth Circle
- Restore Pattern (p. 148)

Fourteenth Circle
- Shadow Palace (p. 148)

Nethermancy Spells

Nethermancers deal with the netherworlds and their inhabitants. Nethermancy magic often involves spirits and other non-worldly entities. Their spells are also heavily involved with the workings of life and death and the nature of astral space.

Ninth Circle
- Create Life (p. 139)
- Dark Sword (p. 140)
- Disrupt Magic (p. 140)
- Mystic Vessel (p. 146)
- Shift Skin (p. 149)
- Silent Darkness (p. 149)
- Talent Shredder (p. 150)
- Void Wave (p. 151)
- Walking Dead (p. 151)

Tenth Circle
- Animate Dead (p. 136)
- Astral Slice (p. 136)
- Damage Transfer (p. 140)
- Fragile Pattern (p. 144)
- Gateway (p. 144)
- Soul Trap (p. 149)
- Spirit Tempest (p. 150)
- Strong Pattern (p. 150)
- Tap Horror Karma (p. 150)

Eleventh Circle
- Alter Life (p. 136)
- Shatter Pattern (p. 148)
- Unnatural Life (p. 151)

Twelfth Circle
- Forge Falsemen (p. 144)
- Pervert Emotion (p. 147)

Thirteenth Circle
- Erase Horror Mark (p. 142)
- Eternal Youth (p. 143)

Fourteenth Circle
- Call Forth the Army of Decay (p. 137)

Wizardry Spells

Wizards are the most scholarly of all magicians, primarily con-

cerned with the workings of magic. Their spells usually deal with magic and its effects, but they do operate through the interaction of magic with a, usually living, target. Wizardry spells cover those areas that other magicians are not able to affect.

Ninth Circle
Absorbing Sphere (p. 135)
Channel Raw Magic (p. 138)
Draining Eye (p. 141)
Glowing Swarm (p. 145)
Observe Event (p. 146)
Reattach Limb (p. 147)
Tell Tale (p. 150)
Wipe Matrices (p. 152)

Tenth Circle
Death Vow (p. 140)
Draw and Quarter (p. 141)
Hold Pattern (p. 145)
Journey to Life (p. 145)
Onion Blood (p. 147)
Spell Fusion (p. 149)
Warp Astral Space (p. 151)

Eleventh Circle
Block Magic (p. 137)

Twelfth Circle
Alter Form (p. 135)

Thirteenth Circle
Cleanse Astral Space (p. 138)

Fifteenth Circle Spells
City in a Bottle (p. 138)

SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

The following spells are available to the magician Disciplines presented in this book and appear in the same format as those described in the **Spells** chapter of the ***Player's Guide***.

ABSORBING SPHERE
Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 60 yards (30 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+12 rounds
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

This spell conjures a tiny red sphere that eccentrically orbits a character in a protective pattern. The magician waves his finger in a circle around his head, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test. If an Attack Test against the target is less than the sphere's Effect Test, the attack hits the orb. The attacker makes a Damage Test as normal, but the sphere absorbs all of the damage. After the sphere has been struck, the magician may make a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of a target within range. If successful, the Damage Points absorbed by the sphere are "dumped" onto the target. Alternatively, the magician may "dump" the damage into astral space with a successful Spellcasting (6) Test. A sphere with even 1 Damage Point cannot be used to block attacks—the orb must be emptied before it can intercept and absorb any further damage.

AFTERLIFE
Threads: 5
Weaving: 16/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+14

Illusion. This spell makes the magician and another character appear to vanish. The magician hums a dirge, then bows toward the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target finds himself part of a panoply where he believes he is being judged by the spirits of the dead, the actions of whom are controlled by the magician. The magician makes an Effect Test in place of any Interaction Tests needed to make the target believe that he really is in the afterlife. The target need not believe he is dead, just that the spirits of the dead are eager to judge him. Unless the illusion is disbelieved, the target is likely to uphold his end of any bargains he makes with the "spirits of the dead." The magician must concentrate during the duration or the illusion fades and the spell ends. The target's Interaction Tests are considered Sensing Tests.

AIR FORTRESS
Threads: Variable (see text)
Weaving: 17/23 **Casting**: 8
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank×10 hours
Effect: WIL+12

Air. This spell creates a translucent fortress from elemental air. At the magician's discretion, the fortress may be tinted to make it easier to see. The magician paces out the dimensions of the fortress while weaving a maximum number of spell threads equal to his Thread Weaving Rank, then makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If successful, each thread woven creates up to 36 square yards of floor space (a 6-yard by 6-yard by 1-yard thick section, or the equivalent) and a 3-yard-high wall surrounding the floor space. Smaller walls and ceilings can be inserted to divide the interior space as the magician desires. Floors may be stacked one upon one another, and some of the exterior walls may be discarded for aesthetic reasons. Other non-air elements, such as wooden doors or stone masonry, may be added to complete the fortress. Once the fortress has been assembled, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is used as the Physical Armor and Death Ratings for the fortress' exterior walls and floors. Interior walls and ceilings have a Physical Armor and Death Rating equal to the magician's Spell Defense. The fortress may be raised and lowered vertically at a Movement Rate of 4; it may travel over the countryside at a Movement Rate of 8 (approximately 5 miles per hour). The magician may extend the spell duration to a year and a day by taking 1 Blood Magic Damage. For each +1 Blood Magic Damage he takes, the magician may further extend the duration by another year and a day. This damage cannot be healed until the fortress is destroyed or the spell ends.

ALTER FORM
Threads: 8 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 16/26 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch (see text) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Alters the nature and pattern of the target

This powerful ritual spell changes the physical nature and True Pattern of an object, Namegiver, creature, or entity. It is most often used to repair or reshape old and tattered or worn items, for example, reshaping a rusty old sword into a newly-forged broadsword. When cast on non-magical items, the spell is generally innocuous, though casting it on weapons or armor that have been enhanced through use of the Forge Armor or Forge Blade talents means those improvements are lost. When used against

items that have their own True Patterns, however, the effects can be disastrous—the item's Pattern is effectively erased, transforming it into a non-magical item and breaking any threads woven to it. When cast on living beings, the spell irrevocably alters the target's True Pattern. For Namegivers, this has the same effect as re-Naming; it erases the target's identity and, if he is an adept, takes away all of his talents and abilities. Each spell thread takes one hour to weave and the magician may attempt to weave only a single thread each day. While the daily thread is being woven, the magician must remain within 10 yards of the target or he loses all previously woven threads and must begin the spell anew. The magician speaks aloud a brief description of what he is altering the target into, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If casting the spell on a non-magical item, the magician must achieve an Average Result; casting the spell on a magical item requires an Excellent Result; casting the spell on a living being—Namegiver, creature, or Horror—requires an Extraordinary Result. If successful, the target is transformed into the magician's stated form. If failed, the magician may attempt the ritual again on the same target, spending time reweaving the required threads, but he adds +2 to the Casting Difficulty for each additional attempt he makes. Regardless of the number of failed attempts, the spell can only be successfully cast once on the same target—they can never again be affected by this spell.

Alter Life

Threads: Varies (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 21/26 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 years
Effect: Alters life form's pattern

This ritual spell is a variant of the Create Life spell, p. 139, and is used to improve a character's abilities or change his appearance. The number of required spell threads is determined by the number of alterations the magician wants to perform. For each ability added or improved or appearance aspect changed, he must weave +1 additional thread, up to Thread Weaving Rank threads in total. Each spell thread takes one hour to weave and the magician may attempt to weave only a single thread each day. While the thread is being woven, he must remain within 10 yards of the target or he loses all previously woven threads and must start the spell anew. The target must be submerged in a specially prepared blood broth for the entire ritual or the magician must begin the spell anew. To add to or increase a target's abilities, the blood broth must contain blood from a character or creature with the desired ability or rating at a higher level than the target. The blood broth consumes 100 silver pieces worth of materials each day. Once the magician has woven all of the spell threads, he weaves one final thread to bind all the others together and make the life form viable outside the blood broth, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target rises from the blood broth, its True Pattern permanently altered by the magic of the spell, and its abilities changed. Unlike the Create Life spell (p. 139), Alter Life can be used on Namegivers and on live or dead targets. Corpses can have been dead no longer than three days before the magician begins the ritual. The spell reanimates dead targets, creating a form of "enhanced" cadaver man.

Animate Dead

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/15
Casting: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank+5 days
Effect: Creates cadaver men

Patterned after an ability used by some Horrors, this spell allows a dead corpse to be temporarily returned to a semblance of life. The magician roughly massages the corpse, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the cadaver man's Spell Defense. If successful, the corpse animates, creating a cadaver man (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 278) that falls under the magician's control for the spell's duration. He can mentally control the cadaver man up to a distance of 500 yards, although this requires his concentration. The magician may keep the cadaver man animated for a year and a day by taking 1 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed until the cadaver man is killed (again) or the spell ends.

Astral Materialization

Threads: 4
Weaving: 15/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 1 hour
Effect: WIL+13

This spell forces an astral entity to materialize in the physical plane for a short period of time. The magician must have some way of seeing into astral space to use this spell. The magician grimaces and clenches his fists, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's highest Attribute Step. If successful, the target materializes, often accompanied by a cold fog and a glowing ichor, and remains on the physical plane for the spell's duration, during which time it falls under the magician's control. The magician can verbally control the target from up to the spell's Range. Beyond this distance the target will act on its most recent instructions. The target may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower Step each round. If successful, it breaks free from the magician's influence and can act independently—it can remain on the physical plane until the spell ends or, if it wishes, can return to the astral plane by making a successful Perception or Spellcasting Test against its own Spell Defense.

Astral Slice

Threads: 5
Weaving: 13/26 **Casting**: TSD (Excellent Result)
Range: 80 yards (40 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+15/NA

Patterned after an ability used by some Horrors, this spell attacks a character internally from astral space. The magician uses a knife or dagger to haphazardly cut at the air, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. On an Excellent Result, the spell slices the target from the inside out. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Regardless of the number of Damage Points inflicted, the spell always causes a minimum of 5 Wounds.

BLOCK MAGIC

Threads: 4
Weaving: 16/25 **Casting**: 10
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 10-yard radius
Effect: –10 penalty to magic-related Action Tests

This powerful spell severely constricts the flow of astral energy into an area. The magician adopts a defensive posture, holding out or crossing his arms or putting more weight on his back foot, then makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If successful, any Action Tests based on magical abilities—including Action Tests for talents, spells and magical items—made in the designated area of effect within the spell's range suffer a –10 penalty. This penalty applies to Spellcasting and Effect Tests when casting spells, to Talent Steps, and to the Step Number of any magical effect granted by magical items, including the Damage Step of magical weapons. The penalty also applies to all uses of magical abilities in the affected area by the magician casting the Block Magic spell. If the Step Number of a spell, talent, or magical item is reduced below Step 1, then the ability or item ceases to function for the spell's duration. Note that some talents (and possibly spells and items) do not generate a Step Number—their effect is based solely on their Rank, such as the Karma Ritual, Durability and Spell Matrix talents. These talents are unaffected by the Block Magic spell. If the description of the talent, spell, or item does not incorporate a Step Number, then the Block Magic spell does not affect it. This spell also affects spirit, creature and Horror powers.

BURNING WATER

Threads: 5
Weaving: 15/25 **Casting**: 6
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Area of Effect: 100 square yards of water
Effect: Creates flammable water

Water. This spell makes the surface of a body of water highly flammable. The magician pours a few drops of alcohol, oil, or other flammable liquid onto the water's surface, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the area of effect becomes flammable, like refined alcohol. It does not immediately burst into flame—people and animals can safely drink it, swim in it, and so on. The enchanted water only catches fire when exposed to a source of flame, such as a candle or torch, burning fiercely and inflicting Step 10 damage each round to anything in contact with it (Physical Armor provides protection). This spell is most often used against waterborne ships in combat, but it can also be used to ignite the surface of a pool or other small body of water. On swiftly flowing water, such as parts of the Serpent River, the spell lasts only a round or two (at the gamemaster's discretion) before the current's motion causes the flammable surface to disperse.

CALL FORTH THE ARMY OF DECAY

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 21/29 **Casting**: 10
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Area of Effect: 5-mile radius of caster
Effect: Summons an army of cadaver men

This ritual spell animates corpses, creating a veritable army of the dead, and must be performed within an active bone circle. Each hour, the magician weaves one spell thread, while pouring the blood of a new sacrifice on the ground; the sacrifice may be an animal, but the ritual is often performed using death magic, involving Namegiver sacrifices. After weaving the last spell thread, the magician stands in the circle, raises his arms and makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If successful, all Namegiver corpses within the area of effect rise from their resting-place as cadaver men under the magician's command. The gamemaster determines exactly how many corpses the spell animates. This spell can be devastatingly effective when cast in areas that contain many corpses, such as large graveyards, catacombs, or old battlefields. The magician can mentally control the army while they remain in range, although this requires him to concentrate when issuing commands. Otherwise, the army follows their last orders received. The cadaver men obey the magician's instructions for the duration of the spell, then return to the realm of Death. Before the spell ends, the magician can re-cast the spell to maintain the undead army, as well as raise other cadaver men, if desired.

CALL FORTH THE MAELSTROM

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 25/33 **Casting**: 10
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Area of Effect: 100 square miles
Effect: WIL/NA

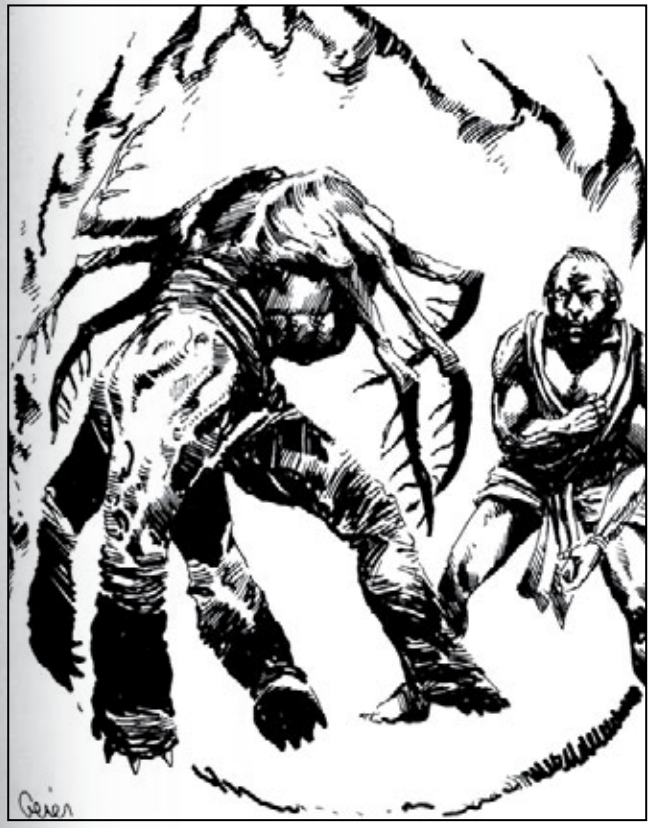
Element [Air, Earth, Fire, or Water]. This ritual spell stirs up a natural disaster of the magician's choosing: an earthquake, tidal wave, forest fire, or the like. Weaving each spell thread takes one week, during which the magician contacts the various elemental spirits that must make the alterations needed for the maelstrom. Small signs of its approach are noticeable as each thread is woven: tremors, high winds, or unusual changes in temperature. After weav-

ing the last spell thread, the magician raises his arms and makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If successful, the area of effect is devastated. Most settlements or cities in the area will be seriously damaged or destroyed. The gamemaster determines specific individual effects of the maelstrom based on its type and location. Characters caught in a maelstrom suffer damage based on the type of disaster—for each minute of direct exposure to the spell's effects, each character takes damage equal to the Effect Test (no armor provides protection).

Channel Raw Magic

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/25 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 3 rounds
Effect: Channels astral energy through target

This spell damages a character by channeling raw astral energy through his astral pattern. The magician wrinkles his brow in concentration, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target suffers raw magic damage each round for the spell's duration. The Damage Step depends on the type of astral region the target is in (***Player's Guide***, p. 110) and is determined as if the target had attempted to cast a Ninth Circle spell using raw magic (natural Mystic Armor provides protection).



City in a Bottle

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 18/33 **Casting**: 12
Range: 25 miles **Duration**: Rank+1 days
Area of Effect: 100 square miles
Effect: Captures terrain in a bottle

This mighty ritual spell is legendary—in fact, many magicians claim it does not exist—allegedly allowing the capture of a complete city and the surrounding terrain, and its placement into a bottle. Weaving each spell thread takes one week and the magician can attempt to weave only one thread over a period of two lunar cycles (about eight weeks). A specially prepared colored glass bottle must be present throughout the ritual. The magician makes a Spellcasting (12) Test. If successful, the designated area of effect within range vanishes from the earth and is magically "stored" in the bottle. The previous site of the captured area becomes an empty plain. For the people and creatures in the captured area, the first thing they notice is the sky, which becomes a whirling mass of colors, changing as the light outside the bottle strikes it. The bottle forms impenetrable walls around the captured terrain; any creatures, Namegivers, or Horrors within the area of effect at the time of casting are trapped in the bottle for the spell's duration. The same walls also protect those inside from the predations of external entities. The bottle is completely invulnerable while the spell is in effect—nothing can penetrate it, although those outside can see in with the right visual aids. When the spell ends, the missing terrain (and its inhabitants) returns to its former location. The magician can extend the duration to a year and a day by taking Blood Magic Damage equal to his Wound Threshold. This damage (and the Blood Wound caused) cannot be healed until the spell ends. According to persistent rumors, entire cities may have weathered the Scourge by using a permanent version of this spell. They are said to exist in bottles kept in a powerfully warded vault, awaiting a hero who will unlock the Key Knowledges necessary to restore them to the outside world.

Cleanse Astral Space

Threads: 5 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 20/28 **Casting**: 10
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 1-mile radius
Effect: WIL+12

This incredibly difficult and dangerous ritual spell cleanses astral space of the taint left by the passage and presence of Horrors. The magician must directly interact with the astral space in his vicinity and must cast the spell using raw magic—this spell cannot be cast from a spell matrix. Weaving each thread takes one hour, during which time the magician concentrates, carefully taking note of the fabric and nature of the region of astral space he is trying to cleanse. Each hour, the gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test against the magician's natural Spell Defense to determine if any Horrors have noticed his efforts to date using a Step Number determined by the type of astral space being targeted (***Player's Guide***, p. 110). Rather than marking the magician, a successful Horror Mark Test instead alerts any nearby Horror to the magician's presence. Most Horrors will likely attempt to prevent the magician from completing the ritual. The magician makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If successful, the gamemaster makes a Warping Test based on the type of astral space to be cleansed. The magician then makes an Effect Test against the Warping Test. Each Result Level achieved reduces the astral pollution within the area of effect by one level. After determining the effects, the gamemaster makes one last Warping Test against the magician's natural Spell Defense for his use of raw magic. If successful, the magician takes damage as normal, but no additional Horror Mark Tests are made. The cleansing effect of this spell is permanent, unless some future atrocity or Horror activity in the region corrupts it again.

Cloud Banish

Threads: 3
Weaving: 15/20 **Casting**: 8+ (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 1-mile radius of ground
Effect: WIL+8

Air. This spell causes clouds to disperse, reducing the chance of rain, hail, lightning, poisonous gas, or other effects associated with the type of clouds. The magician makes warding gestures, then commands the clouds to disperse and makes a Spellcasting Test against the clouds' Spell Defense—against naturally formed clouds, the Spell Defense is 8; against storms the Spell Defense is 13; against gale-force storms, the Spell Defense is 20 or more, based on the storm's intensity. Magically or elementally created clouds or storms resist with the Spell Defense of their creator. If successful, the spell disperses all clouds within the area of effect. Under normal circumstances, clouds take one hour to disperse. Storms or magically summoned clouds may take longer, at the gamemaster's discretion. The magician's Effect Test in minutes is subtracted from the dispersal time. The magician may cast this spell more than once against the same area of clouds, accelerating their rate of dispersal. The effect of the spell centers on the position of the magician at the time of casting and does not move with the magician.

Krayen the Simple casts the Cloud Banish spell against an ominous-looking patch of cloud encroaching on him. He makes a Spellcasting Test, rolling an 11—a success!—against the clouds' Spell Defense of 8. Krayen makes an Effect Test roll of 17. The clouds disperse within 43 minutes (60–17=43).

Cold Embers

Threads: 4
Weaving: 18/25 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 100 yards by 100 yards
Effect: Extinguishes open flames

Air. This spell is a variant of the Snuff spell (***Player's Guide***, p. 198) and extinguishes large non-magical fires, such as forest fires. The magician draws in breath, then exhales sharply while touching the fire and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, all fires in the area of effect are immediately extinguished, regardless of intensity. Whatever was burning becomes completely cool to the touch. The spell does not extinguish the source of the fire, which can be reignited, especially if it is burning in a larger area than was extinguished. The magician may suffer heat damage from close proximity exposure to large fires (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 109).

Council of the Forest

Threads: 9 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 18/32 **Casting**: 10
Range: Self **Duration**: 1 day
Area of Effect: 1-mile radius from magician
Effect: Summons tree/plant spirits

Wood. This powerful ritual spell awakens all tree and plant spirits within the area of effect and calls them to attend the magician. The most powerful spirits physically move to the caster's location, taking half an hour to do so; others remain where they are and mentally link into the council. Each spell thread takes the magician one hour to weave. The magician sways from side to side, as if he was a sapling in a strong wind, and makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If successful, he may bring a single matter before the forest council and ask its judgment, but he cannot force the spirits to obey him or judge in his favor. The matter brought up can be anything of concern to the plant spirits: the fate of the forest, the threat of invaders, punishment for a transgression, a quest for lost treasure, and so on. The council weighs up whatever the magician has to say then offers its advice. The spirits can be powerful allies if they choose to help the magician: they know everything about their forest domain and have game statistics equal to Strength Rating 1 or higher wood elementals (see the **Spirits** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide***). The gamemaster determines the spirits' reaction based on two factors: the magician's presentation of his case and how much respect he has shown for the element of wood in the past. At the gamemaster's discretion, the spirits will choose either 'yea' or 'nay,' depending on how the magician stacks up in these two areas. In the case of a magician having shown complete irreverence toward the element of wood in the past, the reaction could range from outright denial of the request, the spirits returning to their homes, or to complete outrage, with overtly hostile action taken against the magician.

Create Life

Threads: Varies (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 21/26 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 years
Effect: Creates a life form

This time-consuming, difficult, and expensive ritual spell literally "makes" a new life form. The target must be created from a special blood broth, which consumes 100 silver pieces worth of materials each day of use. If the materials are not kept replenished during the entire ritual, the life form will be "stillborn" on arrival. The number of spell threads required is determined by the number of Attributes and abilities the magician wants to give the life form. Each thread adds more mystic energy to the blood broth, increasing the potency of the life form by adding +1 to one Defense Rating, Attribute Step, or Talent Step of the magician's choice. Each spell thread takes one hour to weave and the magician can attempt to weave only one thread each day. While the thread is being woven, the magician must remain within 10 yards of the target or he loses all previously woven threads and must start the spell anew. To increase a target's abilities, the blood broth must contain blood from a character or creature with the desired ability rating at a higher level than the target. For example, to increase a talent from Rank 5 to Rank 6 the magician would need blood from a character with Rank 6 or more in the same talent. Once the magician has woven all the threads to Attributes and abilities, the life form is complete. He weaves +1 additional final thread to bind all the others together and make the life form viable outside the blood broth, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target rises from the blood broth, taking whatever shape the magician desires. The life form created can never be a Namegiver.

Crop Blight

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 21/26 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: A year and a day
Area of Effect: 10 square miles
Effect: Destroys plant life

Wood. This ritual spell blights an area. Each spell thread takes one hour to weave and the magician may attempt to weave only one thread each week. The magician must stand within the area of effect as he weaves each thread, trampling down an increasingly large patch each time. After weaving all the spell threads, the magician uproots a small plant and smashes it into pulp as he makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, all plant life within the area of effect withers and dies within the hour—no plants will grow there for the spell's duration. Most magicians are reluctant to cast this spell, as it causes significant harm to the spirits of the plants killed. In more than one recorded instance, a magician who cast this spell

was found dead just days later, presumably killed by angry plant spirits. A magician who has even attempted to cast this spell will have the act weighed heavily against him should he ever cast the Council of the Forest ritual spell, p. 139.

Damage Transfer

Threads: 3
Weaving: 14/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+10/Mystic

This spell transfers damage from one living character to another. The magician gestures as if pulling on a rope, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher Spell Defense of the two targets involved in the exchange. If successful, a white light illuminates the target from whom the damage is removed, while a dark aura surrounds the target who takes the damage. The magician's Effect Test determines how many Damage Points are transferred, to a maximum equal to that currently taken by the target from whom the damage is being removed.

Caelarion successfully casts the Damage Transfer spell on a companion adventurer and a Theran guard, the latter having just struck his companion for 9 Damage Points. Caelarion's Effect Test is 16. Because his companion has only taken 9 Damage Points, this is the most he can transfer to the guard. Needless to say, the guard is perplexed to find himself hurt by his own blow.

Dark Sword

Threads: 6
Weaving: 15/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5 hex) radius of wearer
Effect: WIL+8/Physical

This spell is an incarnation of the power of darkness. It must be cast at night and requires an amulet or medallion. The magician grasps the amulet in one hand, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the amulet's or its wearer's Spell Defense. If successful, a shadowy two-handed sword appears, which melts into the amulet. The amulet's wearer may use the spell's Effect Step as his Melee Weapons Step or Damage Step for an attack with any melee weapon he is wielding during the spell's duration. The magician can maintain a number of these spells equal to his Spellcasting Rank at a time. When the amulet's wearer first enters combat, darkness erupts from the melee weapon he is wielding, filling the area of effect for Effect Test rounds. Those within it suffer a Full darkness penalty to their sight-based Action Tests, unless they are able to see in normal darkness. The amulet's wearer and those who have knowledge of Nethermancy are not affected by this darkness.

Death Vow

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/22 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank weeks
Effect: WIL+10/NA

This spell enforces an agreement between the magician and another character. The magician stipulates the terms of the contract, then shakes hands with the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target's or his own natural Spell Defense. If successful, the terms of the contract take effect, as stated. The contract can be as outrageous as the magician desires, with one important catch—once the spell has been successfully cast, both characters must abide by the contract. The vow is activated by Blood Magic—the magician takes 2 Blood Magic Damage when the spell is cast, which cannot be healed until the spell ends. Once the terms have been agreed upon, and the spell is in effect, the magician's Effect Test determines the Vow Difficulty. If either or both of the characters bound by the spell violate the contract, one or both may die. If the contract is broken, each character makes a Willpower Test against the Vow Difficulty. If successful, nothing happens; the vow is broken with no effect to that character. If failed, the character dies. Death is instantaneous, inflicting Damage Points equal to the character's full Death Rating and 2 Wounds. Regardless of whether the characters live or die, the spell immediately expires if the vow is broken. Because of the risks involved, a magician should be careful not to use this spell to force a character into a totally unacceptable contract. The other character might decide to expunge his shame by breaking the vow and dying, possibly taking the magician with him, rather than be bound by a dishonorable or unfair contract.

Disrupt Magic

Threads: 2

Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 60 yards (30 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL/Mystic

Patterned after an ability used by some Horrors, this spell disrupts any magical force or pattern, from another spell with a sustained duration, to the talents and magical abilities of an adept or a magical item. The magician intently focuses, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target's Spell Defense or, in the case of a spell, the spell's Circle. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Dispel Difficulty of the target spell or ability (***Player's Guide***, p. 138). If successful, the talent, spell, or ability cannot be used again until the target spends a Recovery Test to restore it or recasts the spell. The Disrupt Magic spell can also be used against astral creatures, characters in astral space, and other denizens of the astral plane such as spirits or Horrors. In these cases, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target.

Do Unto Others

Threads: 3

Weaving: 14/20 **Casting**: Varies (see text)
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) (see text) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Creates illusory spell effects

Illusion. This spell allows the magician to cast an illusory version of any non-Illusionism spell that has been successfully cast upon him. The magician must know the Memorize Image talent and have committed the image of the spell used against him to memory. The magician makes a Memorize Image Test against the Dispel Difficulty of the spell he intends to mimic. If successful, he commits the elements of the spell to memory; each spell memorized counts as an image toward the maximum number of images the magician can remember. The magician carries out any gestures needed for the spell he is casting, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the mimicked spell's Casting Difficulty. If successful, he creates an illusory version of the mimicked spell. The illusory

spell has the same effect as the original, but uses the magician's Spellcasting Rank and Willpower Step to determine the spell's damage, duration, and other statistics. The range of the illusory spell is limited to a maximum distance of the spell's Range, even if the original version has a greater range. All spells cast with the Do Unto Others spell are illusions—they may not kill a target and may be disbelieved. Any tests made in response to the spell, such as Knockdown Tests, are considered Sensing Tests. Sensing and Disbelief Tests are made using the original spell's Circle to determine the Difficulty Numbers.

Parien, an ork Illusionist, wants to use the Do Unto Others spell to cast an illusory version of the Razor Orb spell (a Sixth Circle Wizardry spell). Parien has had Razor Orb cast at him in the past, and successfully used Memorize Image against the spell's Dispel Difficulty of 14 to commit the effect to memory. He weaves the three threads required for the Do Unto Others spell, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his target's Spell Defense—the Razor Orb spell's Casting Difficulty. The test succeeds, so his target is hit by an illusory ball of green glowing energy. Parien's Willpower Step (he chooses to use his Willforce talent, paying 1 Strain to do so) is 15, so the illusory Razor Orb has an Effect Step of 30! After making his Effect Test, the target suffers a Wound and makes a Knockdown Test. If the Test Result is 22 or more (the Sensing Difficulty of a Sixth Circle spell), the target not only remains upright, but also senses the illusion and takes no damage.

Dragon's Breath

Threads: 3
Weaving: 15/20
Range: 50 yards (25 hexes)
Effect: WIL+12/Physical
Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: 1 round (see text)

Fire. This spell creates a gout of flame of an intensity comparable to that of a real dragon. The magician inhales deeply, then lets loose a great roar and compares his Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of each target within range, to a maximum number of targets equal to his Spellcasting Rank. If successful, he makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted. The target also catches fire, taking Step 7 damage (no armor provides protection) each round for Spellcasting Rank rounds or until extinguished by the target making a successful Willpower Test against the spell's Effect Step.

Draining Eye

Threads: 4
Weaving: 14/15
Range: 60 yards (see text)
Effect: WIL+10
Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: Rank minutes

This spell creates an eye that drains energy from another character. The magician points a finger to his own forehead, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, a third eye with a pupil that looks like a starry whirlpool appears upon his forehead. Each round, the magician may look at a character within range and make a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's highest Attribute Step. If successful, the magician temporarily drains the target of life force, imbuing himself with that same energy. The target suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests for each Result Level achieved, while the magician gains a +1 bonus per Result Level to his Action Tests. The magician can affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets: he may take an action to direct the eye against another target during the spell's duration, making a Spellcasting and Effect Test as noted above, but only gains additional benefit if the Result Level is greater than previous attempts. He gains the higher bonus in this case; the target is drained as normal. The magician cannot affect the same target more than once. The life force ebbs from the magician once the spell's duration expires or if the target dies.

Draw and Quarter

Threads: 4
Weaving: 16/26
Range: Touch
Effect: WIL+15/Mystic
Casting: TSD
Duration: 1 round

This spell severely damages a restrained target with circlets of energy. As the magician binds the target's limbs, a glowing circle of astral energy forms around each limb. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the astral circlets pull away from the target, tearing at his limbs. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the target takes any damage, the spell causes an additional 4 Wounds. Like the Onion Blood spell, p. 147, this spell is used as a means of execution in some parts of Barsaive.

Earth and Air

Threads: 3
Weaving: 16/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 120 yards (60 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+10

Element [Air and Earth]. This spell converts earth to air or air to earth. The magician focuses entirely on the spell—no movement, speech, or other action is possible—bringing to mind the essence of earth and air, then he imagines reversing the two and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the earth or air. If successful, the spell converts either earth to air or air to earth, as designated by the magician. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the maximum radius of material converted, to a maximum depth equal to the Effect Test result in feet. The converted volume can be of any shape the magician chooses—it is not limited by the shape of the original source material. When the spell's duration expires, the material reverts to its original form. The fabled t'skrang *shivalahala* of House V'strimon used a more powerful Named version of this spell in the last war to sink a number of Theran vedettes threatening to attack the Floating City on Lake Ban.

Eclipse

Threads: 6
Weaving: 15/21
Casting: 6
Range: 20 miles
Duration: Rank days
Effect: WIL+8

Illusion. This spell conjures a dark cloud which billows upward to block the sun. The magician pulls his cloak down over his face or blocks his eyes with his hands, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a cloud of darkness in the shape of a large disk rises out and away from the magician, completely blocking the sun for a 20 mile radius in every direction of where he is standing. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the spell's Disbelief Difficulty. The darkness created by the Eclipse spell simulates the effects of natural darkness for the spell's duration. The Eclipse spell can be used to cancel the effects of the Eternal Day spell. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Effect Test result of the Eternal Day spell. If successful, the Eclipse obscures the light created by the Eternal Day spell, which immediately ends.

Elemental Merchant

Threads: 3
Weaving: 15/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 days
Effect: WIL+5

Fire. This spell conjures a fiery servant which, despite its appearance, is able to negotiate for goods on behalf of its summoner. The spell requires access to a source of flame at least the size of a campfire. The magician raises his arms up high, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician conjures an elemental spirit of fire. The spirit takes on a large humanoid shape, usually dwarf in appearance, except for its height, which often towers over seven feet. If necessary, the elemental merchant can reduce (not increase) its size by up to 50 percent. Once summoned, the magician tells the elemental merchant what he requires. Once it has received its list of instructions, plus sufficient coin for the transaction, the spirit travels to the nearest settlement or city, purchases the goods, then delivers them to the magician. If the spirit must do any haggling or other similar trading negotiations, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of the Haggle Test; the magician's Haggle Rank is equal to his Spellcasting Rank for determining how many Tests he may make for the transaction. In a single trip, the elemental merchant can carry up to 260 pounds of goods. The spirit's fiery body does not harm any merchandise it is carrying. Elemental merchants do not fatigue, and can travel overland at around 20 miles per hour; the merchant can easily travel 24 hours a day, traversing a distance of almost 500 miles, assuming the terrain it is passing over is relatively unbroken. The elemental merchant will protect itself should it be attacked, but will never initiate combat against another being.

Elemental Merchant

DEX: 8 **STR**: 8 **TOU**: 9
PER: 5 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 7

Initiative: 9
Actions: 1
Attack (1): 9
Damage:
Unarmed (2): 10

Physical Defense: 11
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 12
Physical Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 3

Death: 47
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: 13

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 8
Movement: 6

Legend Award: Second Circle

Powers: Haggle [T] (spell Effect Step; see text)

ERASE HORROR MARK

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 17/22 **Casting**: Horror's Spell Defense (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Removes Horror mark

This ritual spell removes a Horror mark from an afflicted subject. Before attempting to cast the spell, the magician must have previously detected the Horror mark using some form of astral sensing (***Player's Guide***, p. 110). Secondly, the spell requires one of the target's pattern items—a group pattern item is not adequate for this task. The magician weaves 1 spell thread into the pattern item each hour. Once the last thread is woven, the magician touches the target character and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the Horror that marked him. If successful, the Horror mark is erased from the target's pattern. The action of removing the Horror mark may alert the Horror that marked the subject. The gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test for the Horror against the magician's Spellcasting Test result. If successful, the Horror senses the removal of the mark and may take appropriate action, as determined by the gamemaster.

ETERNAL DAY

Threads: 5
Weaving: 18/21 **Casting**: 6
Range: 20 miles **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: WIL+8

Illusion. This spell conjures a small bright spark, which rises upward and expands in size until it replaces the sun. The magician rearranges his clothing, ensuring that nothing obscures his vision, then points his hand upward and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a spark flies from the magician's hand, streaking toward the sky, where it takes on the shape of the sun. The spark hangs in the same place in the sky; the sun is no longer seen. The light radiates outward for a 20 mile radius in every direction from where the magician is standing. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the spell's Disbelief Difficulty. The light created by the Eternal Day spell cancels the effects of natural darkness in combat. The Eternal Day spell can be used to cancel the effects of the Eclipse spell. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Eclipse spell's Effect Test. If successful, the Eternal Day light obscures the darkness created by the Eclipse spell, which immediately ends.

ETERNAL YOUTH

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 17/31 **Casting**: 12
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank years
Effect: Temporarily stops the magician aging

This powerful ritual spell allows the magician to resist the effects of aging and thus cheat death, albeit temporarily. Each hour, the magician carefully cleanses his face and body, and weaves one spell thread, taking 1 Permanent Damage with each attempt. Once the spell threads are woven, the magician makes a Spellcasting (12) Test. If successful, the magician ceases to age for the spell's duration. The spell does not reverse the ravages of time, it merely postpones them. The ritual can be cast again before the current effect expires, thus allowing the magician to extend his life indefinitely, as long as his spellcasting is successful. Because of the amount of damage caused by casting the spell, some magicians use death magic to provide the pool needed to support the Permanent Damage taken. Otherwise, they slowly grow weaker and weaker as their lives stretch on. If any attempt to cast the spell fails, that failure undoes all the results of any previously-cast spells; all of the magician's postponed years of aging instantly catch up with him. If the magician has lived past his natural life span, he immediately turns to dust.

FIRE AND WATER

Threads: 3
Weaving: 17/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 120 yards (60 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+9

Element [Fire and Water]. This spell converts fire to water or water to fire. The magician focuses entirely on the spell—no movement, speech, or other action is possible—bringing to mind the essence of water and fire, then he imagines reversing the two and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the fire or water. If successful, the spell converts either fire to water or water to fire, as designated by the magician. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the maximum radius of material converted, up to a maximum depth equal to the Effect Test result divided by 3, in yards. The converted volume can be of any shape the magician chooses—it is not limited by the shape of the original source material. When the spell's duration expires, the material reverts to its original form. The Fire and Water spell allows a magician to create raging fires in the middle of a sea; the fire will not burn out normally until the spell ends.

FIRE WALL

Threads: 4
Weaving: 14/20 **Casting**: 15
Range: 50 yards (25 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) tall, 2-yard (1-hex) wide sections
Effect: WIL+10/Physical

Fire. This spell summons a wall of flame that may be placed along the ground or hung in the air in positions of the magician's choosing. The magician must have a source of fire available to him, such as a torch or a campfire. He waves his arms around, as if painting on a large canvas, then makes a Spellcasting (15) Test—the fire wall's Spell Defense. The wall is composed of multiple 2-yard-by-2-yard sections of enchanted fire, each section up to 1-yard thick. If successful, the magician summons up to Spellcasting Rank wall sections. The magician directs the placement of each wall section, one at a time; summoning and positioning a section of wall takes the magician 1 round to complete, and requires his entire concentration that round. The wall may not be placed on a living being; doing so immediately destroys that section of wall, which still counts toward the maximum number of wall sections summoned. Wall sections can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against a section of fire wall has still struck the wall, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary Result can defeat the fire wall's Armor Rating. Should a character or object touch a section of fire wall, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted. Flammable non-magical weapons that take a number of Damage Points equal to their Size+Damage Step are destroyed.

Fire Wall (1 Section)

Physical Armor: 5* **Physical Defense**: 17
Mystic Armor: 7* **Spell Defense**: 15
Death: 50 **Social Defense**: None
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold**: NA

* Requires an Extraordinary Result to defeat

Forge Falsemen

Threads: 7 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 20/29
Range: Touch
Effect: Creates falsemen
Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: Rank years

This ritual spell creates falsemen—animated statues of straw, wax, stone, or steel originally created during the Scourge by Theran magicians as servants and guards in the city of Parlainth. Prior to beginning the ritual, the magician must first have constructed the statues that are to become falsemen. He then begins weaving the spell threads. Each spell thread takes 1 week to weave, and the magician may attempt to weave only 1 thread each month. After weaving all of the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the type of falseman he intends to create, +1 for each additional falseman of the same type he is attempting to animate. For example, the Casting Difficulty to create five strawmen would be 7 (3 for the first strawman's Spell Defense, +4 for the four additional strawmen). If successful, the target statues are animated, becoming falsemen. Falsemen will respond to verbal commands issued by the magician. See the **Horrors** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** for more information on falsemen, how to issue instructions to them (and how they respond to those instructions), and other special rules. This spell cannot create Named falsemen, like those who fight their endless battles in the War Zone of Parlainth. This spell can only be learned by finding it somewhere in the ruins of Parlainth or from another magician who has already learned it. Statistics for the different falsemen are presented in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 278.

Fragile Pattern

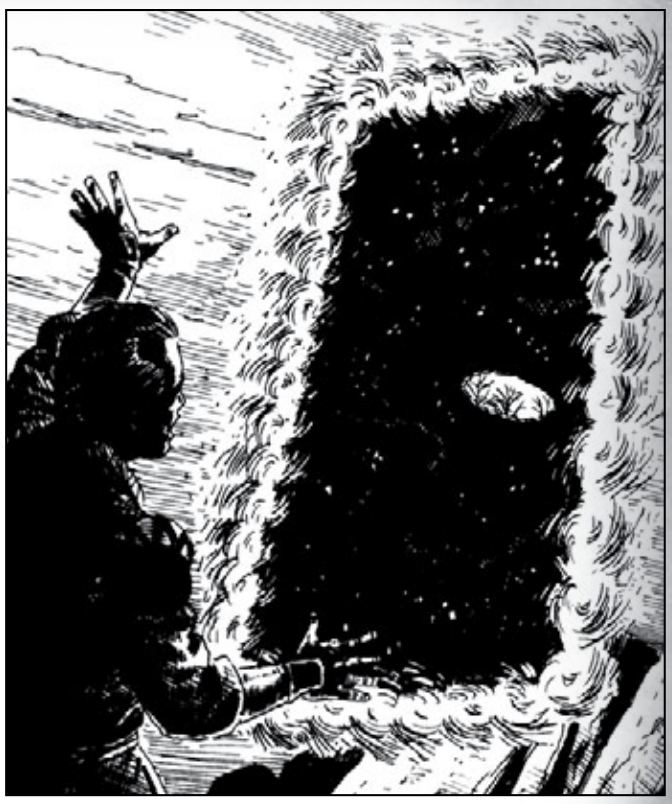
Threads: 7
Weaving: 14/23
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes)
Effect: WIL+12
Casting: TSD
Duration: 1 round

This spell erodes the True Pattern of an item, such as a thread weapon or object. The magician makes ripping, tearing gestures, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target item's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test against the item's Spell Defense. An Average Result damages the item, inflicting a number of Damage Points to the item equal to the Effect Test; a Good Result damages the item's True Pattern—new threads may no longer be woven to the object, but existing threads are unaffected, and can continue to be improved; an Excellent Result further ruins the weave of the item's True Pattern—any existing threads are destroyed; an Extraordinary Result completely destroys the object and its True Pattern.

Frozen Harbor

Threads: 5 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 16/29
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes)
Area of Effect: 1-mile diameter area of water
Effect: Freezes expanse of water
Casting: 9
Duration: 1 round (see text)

Water—Cold. This ritual spell freezes an expanse of water, trapping any vessels within. The magician must stand within sight of the target water and within range of any connected part of it. Weaving each spell thread requires 1 hour. After all of the spell threads are woven, the magician makes a Spellcasting (9) Test. If successful, an area up to a mile in diameter is covered in a 1-yard thick sheet of ice. The ice immobilizes any ships within the spell's area of effect and is strong enough to support the weight of a fully armed and armored troll or obsidiman. It takes one round for the harbor to freeze, but the spell's duration varies depending on the weather: the ice eventually melts on its own. In temperate weather, the ice melts completely within a week, and it breaks up sufficiently for ships to navigate within a day or two of the spell being cast.



Gateway

Threads: 5
Weaving: 12/19
Range: 5,000 miles
Effect: WIL+10
Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: Rank rounds

This spell opens a rift in astral space and connects it to one of the magician's bone circles. The rift forms a gateway between the magician's current position and the target bone circle. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character within 10 yards, including himself. If successful, a gateway is created, 3 yards tall and 2 yards wide, outlined by pinwheels of green sparks. To connect the rift to his bone circle, the magician makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number based on the distance to the Bone Circle as shown on the Spell Distance Difficulty Table. If successful, the gateway stabilizes long enough for characters to pass through. One character can pass through the gateway each round, arriving safely inside the bone circle linked to the portal. Of course, the character may subsequently need to deal with the spirit guarding the bone circle (***Player's Guide***, p. 155).

SPELL DISTANCE DIFFICULTY TABLE

Distance	Difficulty Number
Up to 5 miles	6
6–10 miles	8
11–25 miles	11
26–50 miles	14
51–100 miles	17
101–200 miles	20
201–500 miles	23
501–1,000 miles	26
1,001–2,000 miles	29
2,001–5,000 miles	32

GLOWING SWARM

Threads: 4
Weaving: 12/22 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: Creates a swarm of glowing insects

This spell conjures a swarm of dangerous glowing insects, similar in appearance to fireflies, which can be directed to attack a target character. The magician makes buzzing noises, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the swarm's Spell Defense. If successful, a glowing swarm of insects appears and obeys the magician's orders for the duration of the spell. Controlling the swarm requires the magician's concentration; if he does not command the swarm, it simply hovers 5 yards up in the air and awaits orders. Successful Attack Tests made against the swarm reduce its Initiative, Attack, and Damage Steps by a cumulative –1 per Result Level. The swarm is destroyed if any of its Step Numbers are reduced to zero. The swarm is immune to talents that target Social Defense, including Interaction Tests.

Glowing Swarm

DEX: 11 **STR**: 11 **TOU**: NA
PER: 9 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: NA

Initiative: 14
Actions: 1
Attack (1): 12
Damage:
Bite (1): 12
Death: NA (see text)
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: NA

Physical Defense: 16
Spell Defense: 12
Social Defense: NA
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 3
Recovery Tests: NA
Knockdown: NA
Movement: 8*

Legend Award: Third Circle

* The value is the swarm's flying Movement Rate

GRIM REAPER

Threads: 5
Weaving: 13/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank×10 minutes
Effect: WIL+13

Illusion. This spell creates the semblance of a spirit of death, scaring those who witness the transformation. . The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target takes on the skull-like appearance of a spirit of death. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Social Defense of any living character witnessing the "grim reaper." If successful, the character avoids contact with the target at any cost, fleeing from the "grim reaper" at his fastest Movement Rate until he can no longer see the spirit of death. Each round, the character may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect Step to throw off the effects of the fear.

HAUNTED HOUSE

Threads: 5
Weaving: 15/20 **Casting**: 6
Range: 70 yards (35 hexes) **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: WIL+11/Physical

Illusion. This spell turns a house or other dwelling into a hotbed of supernatural activity. The magician must be holding an item from inside the target house to cast this spell. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he can produce phenomena typical of a haunted house, adding one new phenomenon each night during the spell's duration. These phenomena include moving furniture, temperature changes, creaking noises, altered reflections, voices, blood dripping from the walls, inexplicable shadows, the appearance of ghosts, and so on. The magician can also invent his own special effects, borrowing from local legends for authenticity. He must concentrate to activate the phenomena, but once conjured the effect remains after the magician stops concentrating. To determine if the phenomena affects a character inside the house, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Physical, Spell, or Social Defense, as appropriate. The gamemaster determines the effect, based on the type of phenomena. Any Action Tests that the target makes against the phenomena are considered Sensing Tests.

HOLD PATTERN

Threads: 6
Weaving: 14/23 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: WIL+8

This spell locks a spell, complete with woven spell threads, into a spell matrix, holding it until the magician is ready to cast it. The magician weaves the spell around the matrix containing the spell he wishes to lock, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty. If successful, the spell is held in the matrix for up to Spellcasting Rank days. A spell can be held at any point during its casting. For example, a magician could weave all the threads for a spell then use the Hold Pattern effect, leaving only the Spellcasting Test unresolved and postponing making a Spellcasting Test to release the held spell. Magicians can pack a lot of firepower into a few rounds with judicious use of this spell, but it does tie up a spell matrix until the held spell is used. As soon as the held spell is released, the Hold Pattern effect ends and the spell expires.

JOURNEY TO LIFE

Threads: 7 (see text)
Weaving: 14/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: WIL+15

This spell guides a deceased character's spirit back from the afterlife to his body, bringing him back to life. The magician snakes a tendril of energy through a deceased character into the astral plane and beyond. The tendril acts as a beacon and a pathway for the spirit of the deceased. The operation is stressful; each round of weaving and casting causes the magician 1 Strain. The magician touches the body and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, as if he were alive. If successful, the target's spirit can begin to find its way back to the body. The magician's Effect Test determines the target's Spell Defense against other spirits who might find the pathway and try to possess the body. The journey takes as many days to complete as the deceased has been dead, counted from the time it starts. For example, if the deceased has been dead for a long time, say, 54 days when the spell

EVENT MODIFIER TABLE

Event Occurred	Difficulty Modifier
A day or two ago	0
1–3 weeks ago	+1
1–2 months ago	+2
3–6 months ago	+3
7–12 months ago	+6
2–5 years ago	+9
6–10 years ago	+12
11–50 years ago	+15
51–100 years ago	+18
101–200 years ago	+21
201–500 years ago	+24
501+ years ago	Impossible

is first cast, the magician will have to cast several consecutive spells before the spirit can find its way home. If a day passes without the spell being cast, however, the journey is interrupted and must be started all over again. Once the journey is completed, the spirit reinhabits its body, effectively resurrecting the dead character and fully restoring him to health; any Wounds or Damage Points are healed. Likewise, the effects of being dead (decomposition and the like) are also healed. Magicians know it is folly to attempt this spell anywhere but in a Safe region; to cast it in a Tainted or Corrupt region is to extend an invitation few Horrors would refuse.

Moon Shadow

Threads: 5
Weaving: 16/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: 1 month
Effect: WIL+10/NA

This spell creates a pale duplicate of a character's shadow. The magician requires a Pattern Item for the target character and must cast the spell at night, under the light of the moon. The magician shuffles from one foot to the other, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the spell steals part of the victim's shadow, creating a second light-gray shadow in its place. This second shadow forms at the target's feet, then glides over to the magician. The target's own shadow lightens slightly. Even in the stark light of the desert sun, his shadow is, at best, a light, wavering gray. Once created, the spell's effect has a limitless range. Through the moon shadow, the magician can hear whatever the target hears; when the target speaks, the shadow speaks the same words. The magician can harm the target by plunging a silver dagger into his moon shadow and making an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted. A Dispel Magic spell can negate the spell's effects, but must be cast against the moon shadow itself, not the target.

Mystic Vessel

Threads: 3
Weaving: 15/23 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+10

This spell was created to conceal magicians from Horrors, and in some cases, other Namegivers, and can only be cast on a living Namegiver. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he places his mystic essence into the living target "vessel" for the duration of the spell. During the spell's duration, the magician cannot use any of his talents or magical abilities, but also cannot be detected as being an adept or magician by a successful Astral Sensing Test. Instead, he appears as a mundane, non-magical Namegiver. The vessel gives off a faint magical aura, however, that can be detected through astral sensing. The magician's Effect Test determines the Detection Difficulty for any Astral Sensing Tests made to ascertain the true nature of the vessel. The target does not gain any of the magician's abilities when acting as a vessel. The magician can regain his abilities and end the spell at any time by simply touching the target. If the target dies, or is the subject of a successful Dispel Magic spell, the spell ends and the magician regains all of his abilities.

Observe Event

Threads: 5
Weaving: 14/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Variable (see text)
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius
Effect: WIL+3

This spell plays with the flow of time, a dangerous undertaking under any circumstances, allowing the magician to observe past events that occurred within 10 yards (5 hexes) of where he is standing. The magician states clearly which event he wants to observe, as in "I wish to see the last crime committed here" or "I wish to see what Lord Malban last did here", then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any characters present at the scene. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the same Spell Defense, applying modifiers based on how long ago the event occurred from the Event Modifier Table. If successful, the magician is granted a vision of the past, taking 1 Strain per round of observation. As he observes the scene, the magician also gets a clear sense of when the event occurred. The event is replayed as it happened, round by round, until the magician decides he has seen enough or can't handle the Strain, in which case the spell ends.

One of the Crowd

Threads: 5
Weaving: 14/21 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 15 yards **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+10

Illusion. This spell changes the magician's appearance to better blend into the local populace. The magician blanks his mind, relaxing his features as if sleeping, and passes his hand over his face each time he weaves a spell thread. With each pass, his face changes appearance, perhaps becoming a t'skrang merchant on the first pass, a dwarf clown on the next, or an ork mercenary on the third, before returning to normal. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he nods toward a target and makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician's appearance is altered to match that of the target. The magician may later choose a different target and adopt his appearance by making another successful Effect Test,

changing his appearance as often as he wishes for the spell's duration. Interaction Tests made against the magician while the spell is in effect are considered Sensing Tests.

Onion Blood

Threads: 4
Weaving: 16/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+6/Mystic

Patterned after an ability used by some Horrors, this ugly spell literally peels a character open. The magician tears a parchment into pieces, plucks a flower, or peels an onion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's skin and muscle begins to peel away, layer by bloody layer. Each round, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the target takes any damage, he takes an additional Wound. Characters other than the magician who see the victim flayed must make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower Step. If failed, the character flees out of sight of the victim, horrified by what they see. Use of the spell is outlawed in Throal, except for legal executions of criminals who have committed heinous crimes. Many other kingdoms in Barsaive have followed suit, although, realistically, most lack the ability to enforce the law upon a high-Circle magician.

Pervert Emotion

Threads: 10
Weaving: 23/29 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 days
Effect: Twists the target's thoughts and emotions

Patterned after an ability used by some Horrors, this spell perverts a character's emotions. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he twists the target's thoughts and emotions in any way he wishes. The gamemaster determines the severity of the effect based on the Result Level achieved. For example, an Average Result might allow the caster to change strong anger into affection, while turning bitter hatred into euphoria might require an Extraordinary Result. The gamemaster should also take into account the circumstances of the situation when determining the effect. When the spell ends, the target remembers everything experienced while under the spell's influence. Repeated use of this spell on the same individual has been known to cause the victim to go insane.

Petrify

Threads: 4
Weaving: 19/26 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: WIL+5

Earth. This spell turns a character to stone. The magician casts a handful of powdered stone at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower Step. If successful, the target turns to stone of the same type used to cast the spell. All of the target's clothing and possessions are transformed along with him. Each hour, the target may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect Step. If successful, the spell ends, restoring him to his normal state. Any damage inflicted on the target while in "statue" form carries over when he returns to normal. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 3 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed until the spell ends. The target may still try to break free during this time, but may make only one attempt each day.

Purify Forest

Threads: 12 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 28/33 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Permanent
Area of Effect: 10-mile radius from magician
Effect: Cleanses astral space over forested areas

Wood. This ritual spell purifies the astral space corresponding to an area of forest or jungle. Created to counter the corrupting influences of Horrors on astral space, the spell is usually only cast on Corrupt astral regions. Weaving each spell thread takes one week, during which time the magician must walk around the borders of the area of effect, making one complete circuit. The magician must enter the area of astral space corresponding to the target land. Upon returning to the physical world, he pours water onto a small pillar of stones taken from the area of effect, symbolizing the cleansing of the land. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any Horror that has traveled through the tainted area within the past year and a day. If successful, the astral space corresponding to the target area is cleansed, making it a Safe region.

Reattach Limb

Threads: 6
Weaving: 15/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL/NA

This spell attaches a severed limb to its owner. The limb must be in good condition; limbs that have been preserved by magic, such as the Cold Storage spell, may be attached to their owner using this spell. The magician first reopens the original Wound—the target takes Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold—then pushes the severed limb into position and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the limb attaches itself to the target; muscles, bones and arteries are magically grafted into their original position.

The magician's Effect Test acts as a Recovery Test on the target, due to the regenerative processes. A magician can graft a limb onto a character other than the owner who has lost a limb of that type (arm, leg, and so on) and of a similar size, but requires a Good Result on his Spellcasting Test.

Restore Pattern

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 20/31
Range: Touch
Effect: WIL+15
Casting: TSD
Duration: 1 round

This ritual spell restores a damaged or warped pattern to wholeness. Weaving each spell thread takes one hour, during which time the magician must be within 5 yards of the target. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test acts as a Recovery Test, reducing the amount of damage the target may have suffered, taking Wounds into account as normal. The magician compares his Effect Test against the Test Result (or Step Number, if no Test was made) of any spell or magical ability that altered or damaged the target's Pattern, such as the Shatter Pattern or Talent Shredder spells. If successful, the damaging effect of the spell or ability is ends.

Revulsion

Threads: 4
Weaving: 15/21
Range: Touch
Effect: WIL+13
Casting: TSD
Duration: Rank+1 minutes

Illusion. This spell changes a character's appearance into a grotesque parody of itself, filling those who see him with disgust. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's appearance becomes grotesque; those who see him are filled with revulsion. Each round, the magician selects a character within sight of both himself and the spell's target, then makes an Effect Test against the viewer's Spell Defense. If successful, the viewer is repulsed by the spell's victim, and can take no action other than turning his head to avoid seeing him or fleeing from the target. On an Excellent Result, the target becomes physically sick at the grotesque sight, and can do nothing but retch for the duration of the spell. Any Interaction Tests made against the target are considered Sensing Tests.

Shadow Palace

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 21/32
Range: Touch
Effect: WIL+10
Casting: 8
Duration: Rank days

This ritual spell creates a doorway into astral space that houses a palatial dwelling. The magician slowly constructs a doorway in the air as he weaves spell threads at a rate of one thread per hour. Once the last thread is woven, he makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If successful, the magician opens the door and reveals a beautiful palace, which both he and his guests can enter. The magician's Effect Test determines the Detection Difficulty for anyone attempting to detect the closed entrance to the shadow palace. To enter the palace without the magician's permission, a character must make a successful Willpower Test against the spell's Effect Step. The shadow palace occupies a pocket of astral space up to 10,000 square yards in size, furnished and appointed as the magician desires. Characters in the palace are free from the constraints of the physical space they just left. The palace is safe, clean, and dry: an ideal place to rest and recuperate. Food and drink are provided in whatever form the magician desires; otherwise, the only things in the palace are those the guests bring with them. When the characters leave the palace or when the spell ends, the magician and all his guests reappear at the same spot in the physical world from which they left. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 1 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed until the palace is destroyed or the spell ends. For each +1 Blood Magic Damage taken, he may further extend the duration by another year and a day.

Shatter Pattern

Threads: 7 (see text)
Weaving: TSD/23
Range: Touch
Effect: WIL+15/NA
Casting: TSD
Duration: Varies (see text)

This powerful spell disrupts and damages a target's pattern. The magician weaves the spell threads through the target's pattern, requiring an Excellent Result on each Thread Weaving Test to achieve the full potency; on an Average or Good Result, those threads are not fully integrated with the target's pattern and so the target does not suffer the spell's full effect. Once all spell threads are woven, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense to determine the spell's potency. On an Average Result, the effect lasts for Spellcasting Rank days; on a Good Result, the effect lasts for Spellcasting Rank months; on an Excellent Result, the effect lasts for Spellcasting Rank years; on an Extraordinary Result, the effect is permanent. The spell's effect is reduced by poorly-woven spell threads. For each thread woven with an Average or Good Result, the Result Level of the spell's Effect Test is lowered by one level, to a minimum Average Result. The Effect Test also determines the number of points the magician can use to weaken the target. The magician can use each point to inflict 1 Damage Point to the target, or subtract –1 from one of the target's Defense Ratings, or subtract –3 from one of the target's Attribute Values (also lowering the Attribute Step). This effect is also reduced by poorly-woven spell threads. For each thread woven with an Average or Good Result, the Effect Test is reduced by –3, to a minimum of 1. The target suffers total or near-total amnesia for the spell's duration because his pattern has been weakened to the point of collapse. If the Effect Test lowers all of the target's Attribute Values below 1 or inflicts damage equal to his Death Rating, the target dies. When examined astrally, the victim appears to have a shattered pattern.

Assuming the target survives, only the magician's death or a spell such as Dispel Magic or Restore Pattern can reverse the spell's effects. Dispelling the spell requires a Result Level on a Dispel Magic Test equal to that earned by the magician as a result of his Effect Test against the target when he cast the spell. While a less-successful Dispel Magic Test will not heal the target's pattern, it helps to reverse some of the spell's effects. The Dispel Magic Test determines the number of points restored to the target, distributed evenly among all Attribute Values or Defense Ratings reduced by the spell. Unless the magician makes the spell permanent, its effects wear off soon after it ends. Damage caused by the spell heals at a rate of 10 Damage Points per minute; Attribute Values and Defense Ratings return at a rate of 1 point per minute. While this spell can be used to lower the target's Spell Defense to make it easier to perform the Alter Life ritual on the same target, it also enhances the ritual. The weakening of the target's pattern grants the magician a +2 Spellcasting Test bonus when casting the Alter Life spell against the target.

SHIFT SKIN

Threads: 2
Weaving: 17/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+4/NA

Patterned after an ability used by some Horrors, this spell literally rips the skin from a character. The magician touches his victim with a quick wrenching motion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's skin starts to tear free from its muscle and fat, twisting and distorting around his body. Each round the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. The first round is the worst for the victim—regardless of the number of Damage Points inflicted, the spell always causes a minimum of 5 Wounds to the target. Creatures who have no skin or muscle are unaffected by this spell. Use of this spell is illegal in most nations, and the mere knowledge of it is a crime in Throal.

SHIFT WALLS

Threads: 5
Weaving: 15/21 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 hours
Effect: WIL+9

This spell moves one or more wall sections. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the wall's Spell Defense (for walls of magical origin, use the creator's Spell Defense). If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the wall's Spell Defense, moving up to two wall sections, no larger than 3-yards by 3-yards by 1-yard in size, for each Result Level achieved. The wall section detaches itself from the rest of the wall, following closely behind the magician until it reaches its new position; this requires the magician's concentration. The walls actually move under the effect of this spell, using illusory forces to suppress the natural elemental forces holding them in place. Once the spell ends, these same forces glide the walls back into their original position, taking one minute per wall section to do so.

SILENT DARKNESS

Threads: 3
Weaving: 15/22 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+8

This spell combines the effects of the Globe of Silence and Ethereal Darkness spells to create a darkened area capable of suppressing noise. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his own natural Spell Defense. If successful, he creates a sphere of complete silence and darkness within the area of effect. Characters within this area cannot see, hear, or speak, and suffer a –8 penalty to all Action Tests requiring use of these senses from the resulting disorientation; the magician is immune to the effect of his own spell, and can act normally. The magician's Effect Test determines the spell's Dispel Difficulty. Spells, talents and skills making use of sound or light, such as Battle Shout, can dispel the sphere if the Action or Effect Test is at least equal to the spell's Dispel Difficulty.

SOUL TRAP

Threads: 6
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Traps deceased's soul

This spell traps the spirit of a dead Namegiver in his body for a short time. The target character must have been dead no more than Spellcasting Rank hours. The magician touches the corpse, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, as if it were still alive. If successful, the period during which the target can be saved from final death through magical forms, such as a last chance salve, is extended to Spellcasting Rank hours. This spell can be cast again just before it ends, further extending the period. If the spellcasting attempt fails, the Namegiver is dead; no further attempts to cast the spell on the target will succeed.

SPELL FUSION

Threads: 4
Weaving: 16/26 **Casting**: 6; TSD; 12 (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: 3 rounds
Area of Effect: 20-yard (10-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+3

This spell allows spells cast by other magicians to be captured and fused together into single spell, which can be recast. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a sphere of astral energy forms and hovers next to him. Whenever another magician casts a spell within the area of effect, the magician can attempt to capture the spell in the sphere by making an Effect Test against the target spell's Spellcasting Test. If successful, the sphere captures and holds the target spell's energy. The magician must concentrate to maintain this spell; if his concentration is broken, the spell ends. When the spell ends, the magician may focus all the spells captured within the sphere at a single target within range by making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, requiring a Good Result. If successful, the target suffers the effects of each captured spell as they had all been cast on him at the same time. Alternatively, when the spell ends, the magician may dispel all the captured spells by making a successful Spellcasting (12) Test. If failed, he must cast them at a target instead.

Spirit Tempest

Threads: 4
Weaving: 16/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Area of Effect: 10×10×10-yard (5×5×5-hex) area placed in Range
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic

This spell summons minor tasked spirits to attack one or more target characters. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirits' Spell Defense. If successful, he summons two spirits for each Result Level achieved. Starting in the round after the spell has been cast, each spirit attacks a single target character within the area of effect; this includes the magician and his allies, if they are within the same area. The spirits attack by passing through the target's body, causing him extreme physical pain. If the spirit's Attack Test succeeds, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Tempest spirits have no spirit powers or Karma. They do not follow orders given to them, even by the magician—they only attack.

Spirit Tempest

DEX: 8 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 8
PER: 8 **WIL**: 8 **CHA**: 7

Initiative: 9
Actions: (see text)
Attack: 9
Damage:
Effect Step (see text)

Physical Defense: 15
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 14
Physical Armor: 10
Mystic Armor: 4

Death: 46
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: 13

Recovery Tests: 4
Knockdown: 7
Movement: 6*

Legend Award: Third Circle

* The value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate

Strong Pattern

Threads: 6
Weaving: 18/23 **Casting:** TSD
Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank+7 years
Effect: WIL+12

This spell enhances the durability of a pattern or threaded item, such as a magic weapon. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the item's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the item's Spell Defense. An Average Result makes the item more durable, increasing its Physical Armor by +5. A Good Result also strengthens the item's pattern, increasing its Mystic Armor by +5. An Excellent Result also fortifies the weave of the pattern, adding +5 to the item's Spell Defense. An Extraordinary Result adds another +5 to the item's Physical Armor, Mystic Armor, and Spell Defense. All increases are made only to the item's Armor or Defense Ratings, they are not bestowed upon the item's user.

Talent Shredder

Threads: 1
Weaving: 17/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL

This spell suppresses an adept's ability to use his talents. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a spiral coil of inky darkness shoots from his hands to the target. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Step Number of the talent he wants to shred. If successful, the target is unable to use the talent until he makes a Recovery Test. Talents that have a permanent effect, such as the Durability and Karma Ritual talents, are not affected by this spell.

Tap Horror Karma

Threads: 2
Weaving: 18/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 50 yards (25 hexes) **Duration**: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+10

This spell drains Karma from a Horror. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician steals 1 Karma Point from the Horror for each Result Level achieved. The magician may incorporate the Karma as his own, discarding the most evil portions of the energy, in which case he uses his own Karma Dice. Or he may try to use the Horror's Karma whole, using the Horror's Karma Dice. Using the Horror's Karma this way causes the magician 2 Strain for each Karma Point he spends. Dealing with such malevolence is not easy, even for an advanced magician. Karma tapped from a Horror must be used before the spell ends or it is lost.

Tell Tale

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 minute
Effect: Gains the answer to a question

This spell allows events that occurred in the vicinity of an inanimate object to be divined, thus realizing the saying "if only the walls could talk". The magician touches the object and releases a tiny portion of his life force, causing him 1 Strain, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the object's Spell Defense. If successful, he is able to ask one "yes/no" question of the object, which it will answer truthfully, sensing events as if the magician had been present to witness them. The event must have occurred no more than Spellcasting Rank days ago for the spell to work.

Thundering Walls

Threads: 3
Weaving: 15/21 **Casting**: 6
Range: 80 yards (40 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: WIL+9/Mystic

Air. This spell causes the walls of a single room or walled enclosure to reverberate with thunder and lightning. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the walls of the room shudder, then roil with clouds, in which flashes of lightning can be seen. Each round, the magician has a choice of two options:

Thunder: This option creates an impossibly loud boom of thunder that reverberates throughout the room. The magician compares

his Effect Test against the Social Defense of each character in the target room. If successful, the character flees from the room at his fastest Movement Rate and will not return unless he makes a successful Willpower Test against the spell's Effect Step or the room stops thundering.

Lightning: This option creates a horrific barrage of lightning bolts. The magician makes a second Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of a target character in the room. If successful, the character is struck by lightning and the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted.

Unnatural Life

Threads: 7 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 19/25 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch (see text) **Duration**: Rank years
Effect: Restores target to "unnatural" life

Patterned after an ability used by some Horrors, this ritual spell raises a corpse from death, imbuing it with unnatural life. The spell only works on corpses that have been dead for less than a year and a day. Each spell thread takes one day to weave, during which time the magician must remain within 100 yards of the corpse. Once the last spell thread is woven, the magician touches the corpse and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, as if it were still alive. If successful, the corpse lives (again) for the spell's duration. The corpse remains visibly decayed and retains the distinctive odor of rotting flesh. Aside from a horrific appearance and smell, the animated character can function as he did in life; the Unnatural Life spell revives him with all of his Attributes and talents intact. Each use of the Unnatural Life spell causes the magician 1 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed until the target "dies" again or the spell ends. Characters animated by the Unnatural Life spell are hard to destroy. They may make a Recovery Test during any combat round as a Standard Action. Additionally, the unnaturally living may make unlimited Recovery Tests in the course of a day. The magician may dispel the effects of the Unnatural Life spell any time the unnaturally alive character is nearby by touching the target.

Void Wave

Threads: 4
Weaving: 15/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+13/Mystic

This spell creates a powerful wave of roiling blackness in which can be seen the faint movement of tortured spirits. The wave is 10 yards wide and rolls out from the magician to a distance of 100 yards, like a murderous ground mist. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test, comparing the result against the Spell Defense of each target in the wave's path. If successful, he makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted, otherwise the wave passes over the target with no effect other than leaving a slight chill in its wake.

Walking Dead

Threads: 4
Weaving: 13/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: WIL

This spell raises a recently-deceased character as a zombie. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the corpse's Spell Defense (as if it were still alive) or the number of days it has been dead. If successful, his Effect Test determines the maximum Attribute Value for the zombie. A Test Result of 9, for example, would cap each of the zombie's Attribute Values at 9; any higher Attribute Value would be reduced to 9, while anything lower would remain at that number. The zombie's original Initiative, Perception, and Willpower Steps are reduced by –3 each, to a minimum of Step 1. Its Movement Rates are halved, and its Death Rating is increased by +30. The zombie has an Unconsciousness Rating of "NA." During the spell's duration, the zombie obeys the magician's commands. If its Willpower and Perception Steps are 3 or more, the zombie can obey complex instructions, such as "Wait for the next person to enter this room and kill him."

Warp Astral Space

Threads: 3
Weaving: 17/23 **Casting**: 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Area of Effect: 50-yard (25-hex) radius sphere from point of casting
Effect: Warps astral space; –8 penalty to Spellcasting Tests through or in the warped area

This spell twists, stretches, punctures, and otherwise deforms astral space. The magician makes a Spellcasting (15) Test. If successful, the astral space in a 50-yard radius of the magician becomes warped. All characters whose spells are cast from, enter, or pass through the warped space suffer a –8 penalty to their Spellcasting Tests. Since the magician is intimately familiar with

this warping, his spells are unaffected. In the physical plane, this penalty manifests itself as spells wildly careening around, over or below their intended targets, or just vanishing altogether. The penalty also applies to attempts this spell, as finding the spell pattern requires traveling through the warped area of astral space.

WATER WALL

Threads: 4
Weaving: 14/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) tall, 2-yard (1-hex) wide sections
Effect: WIL+10

Water. This spell summons a wall of water that can be placed along the ground or on water in positions of the magician's choosing. The magician must have at least one quart of water in a vessel to cast this spell. He puts his finger in the vessel, stirring the water around, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the wall's Spell Defense. The wall is composed of multiple 2-yard by 2-yard sections of enchanted, swirling water, up to 1 yard thick. If successful, the magician summons a number of wall sections equal to his Spellcasting Rank. He directs the placement of each wall section, one at a time; summoning and positioning a section of wall takes the magician one round to complete and requires his entire concentration that round. The wall may not be placed on a living being; doing so immediately destroys that section of wall, which still counts toward the maximum number of sections summoned. Wall sections can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against a section has still struck the wall, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary Result can defeat the water wall's Armor Rating. When the spell ends, the water reverts to its original volume. If the wall is positioned on a stream (or another source of flowing water) or a body of water larger than itself, it can recover damage taken. The magician's Effect Test determines how many Damage Points are recovered (distributed among any connected sections); this requires the magician's concentration that round.

Water Wall (1 Section)

Physical Armor: 10* **Physical Defense**: 12
Mystic Armor: 12* **Spell Defense**: 10
Death: 60 **Social Defense**: None
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold**: NA
* Requires an Extraordinary Result to defeat

WEATHER CHANGE

Threads: 5
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 hours
Area of Effect: 10-mile radius from magician
Effect: WIL+8

Air. This spell creates localized changes in the weather. The magician softly calls out the names of the winds and rains, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he can make incremental changes to the weather within the spell's area of effect. Each hour the magician may:

- Raise or lower the temperature by 5 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Increase or decrease the wind speed by 5 miles per hour.
- Increase or decrease the chance of precipitation by 10 percent. If it is currently raining, the change may stop the rain; if it is currently dry, the change may start precipitation.

The magician makes an Effect (5) Test to make the first change to the weather, adding +1 to the Difficulty Number for each additional change he makes. For example, if the magician has already raised the temperature by 15 degrees, increased the wind speed by 10 miles per hour, and increased the chance of precipitation by 30 percent (a total of 8 changes), the Difficulty Number of the next change is 13 (5+8=13). Each change takes one minute to effect. The gamemaster determines if there is a change in precipitation after each successful Effect Test.

WIPE MATRICES

Threads: 1+ (see text)
Weaving: 12/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 60 yards (30 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+12

This spell disrupts the target's spell matrices, erasing all the spells contained within. The spell requires a number of threads equal to the number of spell matrices to be erased. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the highest-Rank target matrix. If successful, all of the affected matrices are wiped clean of their current spells. If the number of spell matrices erased is fewer than the total possessed by the target, the specific matrices affected are chosen at random. This spell can affect the target's spell matrix talents as well as specific matrix objects. If a spell is erased in the process of being cast, the target can either abort it or finish casting with raw magic. The target may reattune the wiped matrices as normal (***Player's Guide***, p. 135).

WOOD BLADE

Threads: 4
Weaving: 22/28 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+8 hours
Effect: WIL+16/Physical

Wood. This spell transforms a piece of wood at least one yard long into a broadsword that causes immense damage. The magician grips the piece of wood in both hands, wielding it like a blade, and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the wood transforms into a standard-sized wooden broadsword. When used in combat, the sword's wielder makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

ENCHANTING

Of course you must *understand what you are doing before you begin. Enchanting is not for amateurs. For instance, if I add a drop of this elixir, like so, and … Ahem. Well, not quite the result I was expecting. Don't worry, I'm sure your eyebrows will grow back.*

• Gemmar the Enchanter, Elementalist •

21

Enchanting is the art of transforming mundane objects into magical items. Magicians have fine-tuned several methods of enchanting over the centuries, producing a wide variety of magical items, from humble cook pots to the most legendary enchanted blades.

It is important to note that the creation of magical items is an art. Each item, no matter how simple, must be handmade by individual artisans ranging from enchanters and minor adepts to magicians and adventuring adepts. Neither Throal nor Bartertown nor any other city in Barsaive contains an "assembly line" grinding out magical wares on demand.

Because creating magical items is an art, no single set of rules and numbers for enchanting applies in every case. The process of creating such items contains numerous junctures that require input from both the player and the gamemaster to ensure that the item will be suitable for an individual **Earthdawn** game. Gamemasters in particular should take great care to ensure that the powers of new magical items fit into their campaign and will not ruin the balance of their games.

This chapter start with an overview of the general enchanting process independently from the techniques used (**The Enchanting Process** directly below), then presents what types of items can be produced by Enchanting (**Enchantment Types**, p. 155), then discusses the major techniques used by the different Disciplines to imbue an item with magical power (**Enchanting Techniques**, p. 157), and finally gives an overview over the True Elements that, while not used in all forms of enchanting, are a staple and the most common power source in the production of magical in the world of **Earthdawn** (**True Elements**, p. 158).

THE ENCHANTING PROCESS

Enchanting is usually performed by adepts using Half-magic and talent knacks, but under the right circumstances, minor enchanter adepts and even mundanes (non-adepts) may enchant items as well. With their affinity for the True elements and orichalcum, Elementalists make the best enchanters of all magician adepts, and many of them choose to specialize in enchanting. Weaponsmiths are also skilled at enchanting, especially weapons and armor.

Adepts of other magician Disciplines may also enchant items, but their enchanting abilities are relatively limited. Wizards represent the next most common set of adepts who practice enchanting and they often experiment with the creation of various magical items simply to deepen their understanding of magical forces.

Nethermancers rarely practice enchanting; when they do, they create magical items using bound spirits and blood magic, two methods generally frowned upon by other magicians and by other Namegivers. Illusionists perform little permanent enchanting, save for items especially related to their Discipline; the permanence of enchanting is of little interest to these masters of the ephemeral.

Creating a magical item involves four main steps:

1. Determining the Eenchanting Cost
2. Creating or Obtaining the Materials
3. Imbuing the Item with Magical Power
4. Making the Enchanting Test

DETERMINING THE ENCHANTING COST

Enchanting has a Cost in money, material, and work. A magic item is created by taking an item and enchanting it using magical materials. Both the item and the materials can either be bought or crafted and gathered by the enchanter. The work is always done by an enchanter who charges a fee for his services (see below), but this cost can be lowered if the magical materials are supplied.

The enchanting techniques of Elemental Weaving, Spirit Binding, and Combining Magical Ingredients (see **Enchanting Techniques**, p. 157) require magical materials to be used during the enchanting process in order to power the magic of the desired effect. No matter which of these three techniques of Enchanting is used or of what type the enchanted item is (see **Enchantment Types,** p. 155), the following guidelines apply for determining the Cost of the enchantment:

Enchanting an item requires magical materials worth 50% of the item's n0rmal Cost, determined from the tables in the **Goods & Services** chapter of the ***Player's Guide*** or by the gamemaster. This includes the item to be enchanted, although the Cost for cheap base items can be neglected for simplicity's sake. In other words, half the Cost of a magic item is comprised of materials, the other half is the fee for the enchanter's work.

A player character can enchant an item himself for half its Cost, or provide an enchanter with the materials required and only pay half the item's Cost. At the gamemaster's discretion, a magician who Names a spell on an item might also ask for half the appropriate cost as compensation for the Legend Points spent. Note that the Cost for magic items in the ***Player's Guide*** is always that for the complete item, including both material and wage, but that this price may be adjusted by the gamemaster, for example for such things as taking the physical size of trolls into account when determining the price for magical clothing, or taking a high price for a base weapon treated with a weapon template into account.

The materials used for the enchantment do not necessarily have to be bought with money; they can be found as loot or treasure while adventuring, can be gathered in-between adventures, or come as payments from employers. Gamemasters are encouraged to weave such materials into their adventures, and players are encouraged to look out for such opportunities as quests or bargaining tools.

*Ardalon, in enchanting a warm cloak, covers the material components for the enchantment with the True elements he weaves into the cloak. The Cost for a warm cloak is 300 silver pieces according to the **Player's Guide**, so he has to weave True Elements worth 150 silver pieces into the cloak. A warm cloak requires both True air and True fire, which have a Cost of 50—100 silver pieces per kernel each (see p. 161). From the stack of True elements Ardalon has gathered over the past months, he spends one kernel worth 75 silver pieces of each True air and fire—although any combination covering the 150 silver pieces would have been sufficient.*

Creating or Obtaining the Materials

Creating or obtaining the materials for enchanting, including the item to be enchanted, is perhaps the simplest task.

The magical materials used in enchanting can often be bought in major cities, but can also be gathered, found as loot or treasure, or be the target of a quest a character undertakes.

In comparison to the magical materials, the item to be enchanted is often negligible in both Cost and effort to be obtained, as it is a fairly common mundane item in most cases. Depending on the item, this task may be as simple as purchasing the item or as involved as forging a blade from raw materials. In many cases, fashioning an item to be enchanted involves the use of one or more Craftsman skills and an Artisan skill, as crafting an item and using artistry to adorn it eases the enchanting process (see **Making the Enchanting Test**, p. 154).

Note that weapons, armors, and shields to be enchanted prove an exception to the relation of Cost between items and enchanting materials: if they are enchanted to be thread items with bonuses focused on their task (i.e., Damage Step and Armor Rating), they may have to be treated with the Forge Weapon or Forge Armor talents, respectively. This makes them expensive, and so the item already represents the main part of the Enchanting Cost. Use of the forging talents provides much of the magical energy imbued into the item already, however.

Imbuing the Item with Magical Power

Once a character has created or obtained the item, he infuses it with magical power by treating it with the magical materials. Enchanters use four major techniques to create magical items in **Earthdawn**:

- Infusing an item with the essence of one or more of the five True elements (earth, air, fire, water, and wood) is the most basic means of enchanting an item, and also the most widely used technique for common magic items.
- Similar to weaving True elements into an item, enchanters can also combine magical ingredients to compose magical items or substances. This method is most commonly used when practicing alchemy to create potions, even by non-adepts, but more powerful magical effects can be created with the right materials.
- A magician may also enchant an item by placing a spell pattern into the item's pattern. Generally, magicians use this technique to create minor magical items that can be used by any character, but they may also be used to create thread items. This technique allows some exceptions when producing minor items.
- Finally, a magician may enchant an item by magically placing a spirit in the item's pattern. The spirit may cooperate with the magician, but more commonly the magician binds the spirit against its will.

These techniques are presented in more detail further below (see **Enchanting Techniques**, p. 157). Depending on the technique used, additional tests are required during the step of Imbuing the Item with Magical Power. The ability used for this test depends on the technique used. Some techniques are available to all enchanting adepts, while other techniques only to a fraction of them.

Making the Enchanting Test

The final step in the enchantment process is the Enchanting Test. The Enchanting Test is made with an ability depending on the technique used and the type of item to be created, usually a Talent Test based off of a Talent Knack, available at different Circles to the different enchanting Disciplines. This test completes the item and makes it usable by binding the magic to the item and making the stored power and effects accessible. During this final stage, the enchanter decides any actions or command words necessary to activate the item and, if a thread item, Names the item. Even if a magician successfully performs all other steps of the enchanting process, the enchantment attempt fails if the Enchanting Test fails. The requirements to create a specific item and the Difficulty Number for the Enchanting Test are presented with the different types of magic items found later in this chapter (see **Enchantment Types**, p. 155). Also, for most common magic items and blood charms, the Enchanting Difficulty Number ("EDN") is listed with the item's other characteristics such as Cost, Weight, or Availability in the tables in the **Goods and Services** chapter of the ***Player's Guide***. The Difficulty Number for the Enchanting Test is

further modified (see **Enchanting Modifiers** below) for special efforts made by the enchanter.

Note that large items (like airships, for example) may require multiple Enchanting Tests, for each of the different components that makes up the item. The number of tests required, and the modifiers applied to each test, are determined by the gamemaster.

Enchanting Modifiers

All of the following enchanting modifiers are cumulative, though enchanting modifiers may never reduce the base Enchanting Difficulty by more than half.

Gathering Materials: If the enchanter gathered valuable materials for the item by himself, the gathering process strengthens the enchanter's understanding of the item's pattern-to-be. Every ingredient gathered subtracts 1 from the Enchanting Difficulty (individual kernels of true elements do not counts as one source each, they count as one source per type of element). The material must be necessary to craft the item, and the enchanter cannot gather natural resources with no connection to the item indiscriminately to lower the Enchanting Difficulty.

Crafting Base Item: If the enchanter crafted the mundane item he is to enchant himself, such as a Weaponsmith forging a mundane weapon to be enchanted as a threaded weapon later, the enchanter subtracts 2 from the Enchanting Difficulty. Crafting the item usually is less efficient than just buying it and taking a shot at the Enchanting Test for skilled enchanters, but especially Weaponsmiths consider it a matter of pride to perform all stages of the process, and many magicians believe that crafting and adorning an item (see below) assures their customers that the enchanter is not Horror-marked and has produced an item free of taint.

Using Artisan Skills: Using an Artisan Skill while preparing an item for enchantment familiarizes and binds an enchanter to the item. The enchanter makes a Skill Test for an appropriate Artisan Skill against a Difficulty Number of 9. For every Result Level achieved on the test, starting with Average, the enchanter subtracts 1 from the Enchanting Difficulty. The process of using the Artisan Skill lengthens the time required to enchant the item by the time required to use the Artisan Skill, but can be combined with the process of crafting the mundane base item (see above).

Adding Symbolic Elements: If an enchanter adds a symbolic element to either the item or the process of enchanting, he subtracts 1 from the Enchanting Difficulty. A symbolic element needs to go beyond simple material ingredients or decorative adornments (see the above modifiers), they have to constitute unnecessary measures to produce or enhance the item, and as such are often symbolic deeds done during the enchanting process. For example, a magical sword with the ability to sizzle with lightning is not required to be forged during a lightning storm, but doing so would constitute a symbolic enchanting element. An airship is enchanted with thousands of kernels of True air, but finding an especially large kernel to weave into the bow might make that part of the enchanting process easier. Symbolic elements are always at the gamemaster's discretion. In some cases, spending more money than required for materials might be enough, in other cases, roleplaying or adventuring may be required.

Taking Extra Time: A character may lower the Enchanting Difficulty by taking longer to prepare the item, designing its pattern, or studying how to best weave True elements into it. Each additional month of preparation subtracts 1 from the Enchanting Difficulty; this modifier can be applied up to three times only, for a total of –3.

ENCHANTING DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS TABLE

Technique Employed	Difficulty Modifier
Gathering Material	–1
Crafting Base Item	–2
Using Artisan Skills	–1 per Result Level on Artisan Test
Adding Symbolic Elements	–1 (at gamemaster's discretion)
Taking Extra Time	–1 per month

*Ardalon has woven True elements into his warm cloak and now needs to make a final Enchanting Test. To help make this test easier, he has embroidered the cloak using his Artisan Skills, where he achieved a Good Result on the Skill Test, and has gathered the two types of true elements himself. The **Player's Guide** lists the Enchanting Difficulty Number for the warm cloak as 11, which is now reduced to 7 due to the Difficulty Modifiers applied.*

Enchantment Types

Magical items in **Earthdawn** fall into two broad categories: common items and thread items. Common items are those magical objects that can be used by anyone who knows how they work.

Thread items are considerably rarer than common items, though a certain number of less powerful thread items can be found for sale in many major cities across Barsaive. However, only characters who can attach threads to them may use them.

The time to create an item varies greatly. If not noted in the sections following, the gamemaster should determine the time required to make an item, based on the type of item and what he thinks works best for his campaign. Most of the tasks involved are fairly fast, however, since they require the use of a talent.

Common Items

Readily available throughout Barsaive, these items include day-to-day tools like magical cook pots, firestarters, light quartz, and warm cloaks, as well as less common items such as crystal armor and fire cannons. These minor items may offer little more than convenience to adventuring adepts, but they make up the largest part of an enchanter's or magical crafter's work.

Typically, common magic items are imbued with magic power by weaving True elements into the item's pattern. Each True element gives an item unique characteristics. See **True Elements**, p. 158, for descriptions of the True elements and **Weaving True Elements**, p. 157, for the rules for weaving them into items. Rarer, but required for some types of common items that do not employ elemental effects, is the combination of magical ingredients. Occasionally, magicians create minor magical items by using a spell pattern as the basis for the common item's magical pattern, allowing the item to show effects similar to that of the spell used. Nethermancers and Elementalists can create minor magical items by binding a spirit in the pattern of an object, this is usually a tasked spirit conjured by a spell, so it is treated as using a spell pattern, not Spirit Binding (p. 158). Enchanting Tests for common items default to a Difficulty Number of 13, if not given in the **Goods and Services** chapter of the ***Player's Guide***, and are made using the Create Common Magic Item Thread Weaving talent knack (p. 124). If the Enchanting Test

fails, the time and materials invested are wasted, except if the Technique of Weaving True Elements was used. In this case, the True elements remain with the item's pattern, and the enchanter need only invest time and material other than the True elements again. This safety net of the Weaving True Elements technique is what makes the method so popular.

Blood Charms

No blood magic is used to create blood magic charms; these charms are minor magical items that require a small amount of the wearer's blood (life force) in order to bond to the wearer and to activate the charm's magical power. Some charms, like the Death Cheat and Desperate Blow charms, temporarily provide the wearer with some additional ability. Others, such as the Targeting Eye or Astral-Sensitive Eye charms, are fairly permanent additions to the user's body that provide a constant advantage. The blood magic ritual that bonds the charm to the wearer takes only a moment and requires no test, only the appropriate Blood Magic or Permanent damage.

Blood Charms are created by use of the Alchemy skill by magicians only, employing the enchanting technique of combining magical ingredients. Nethermancers may substitute half-magic for the Alchemy skill for the purpose of creating blood charms. To create a blood charm, the enchanter treats the materials in an alchemical solution for one week, then makes an Alchemy Test as an Enchanting Test (p. 154) against the charm's Enchanting Difficulty Number (EDN). If successful, the charm is created. If the test fails, the character has wasted his time and materials and must start over. An alchemist may produce more than one blood charm at a time, but adds +5 to the Difficulty Number for each additional charm he wants to create.

Gamemasters may allow characters to create new blood charms with unique effects. For more information and guidelines on how to develop new blood charms, see the ***Gamemaster's Companion***.

Living Armor

Living armor is usually crafted from fernweave or living crystal, which acts as a magical ingredient. Only Weaponsmiths possess the skill required to shape the delicate patterns of living material into living armor. They use their half-magic-based Craft Armor ability (***Player's Guide***, p. 55) to make the Enchanting Test as the same test that is made to craft the armor, and the Difficulty Number for that test is the higher of the armor's Enchanting Difficulty Number or the Difficulty Number to create the armor as per the rules of the Craft Armor skill. Crystal armor has to be treated in alchemical solution before being worked on, while fernweave and ferndask armors have to be grown into an approximation of the wearer's shape. Due to this, these armors require an additional week to be created on top of the time required by the Craft Armor skill.

Only armor that is stated to be living armor at the start of its description is created following these rules. For example, wyvernskin armor, while having an EDN, is not living armor, but enchanted with elemental magic, and treated as a common magic item for enchanting purposes.

Spell Matrix Objects

Matrix objects (***Player's Guide***, p. 280) provide magicians with additional spell matrices for storing spell patterns. Like the talents, matrix objects can contain standard spell, armored, enhanced, or shared matrices. All matrix objects must be constructed from material woven with one or more True elements, use orichalcum in their construction or adornment, or be enhanced by magical ingredients.

The Enchanting Test for making matrix objects requires the use of one of the Create Armored, Enhanced, Shared, or Spell Matrix Object talent knacks (see p. 124), appropriate to the type of matrix object being created. To enchant a matrix object, the magician must make a successful Thread Weaving Test using the appropriate talent knack as an Enchanting Test against the matrix object's Enchanting Difficulty, which is its Spell Defense +15. The enchanting process requires at least one week of uninterrupted work.

If the Enchanting Test succeeds, the item is enchanted and can be used normally. If the test fails, the item does not retain the magical qualities the enchanter intended, but the enchanter may reuse the materials in another attempt to create a thread item. If the test yields a Pathetic result, the gamemaster may decide that the materials used in the ritual are ruined.

Thread Items

Thread Items (***Player's Guide***, p. 275) are magical items that possess True patterns and make their power accessible through the use of Thread Weaving. Thread Items usually have a relatively simple pattern and possess only one Key Knowledge, usually their Name. The Enchanting Test for making thread items requires the use of the Create

Thread Item talent knack (p. 124). The magical ritual used to create a Thread Item requires 1 month of work and the use of True elements, orichalcum, or other magical ingredients. During this time the adept can perform only ordinary daily tasks, such as eating, sleeping, light reading and Karma rituals, and must be in good health throughout—free of any damage or Wounds.

At the end of the ritual period, the adept makes a single Enchanting Test using his Thread Weaving Talent supplemented by the Create Thread Item knack. The Difficulty Number of the test is equal to the Thread Item's Spell Defense + 10.

If the Enchanting Test succeeds, the item is enchanted and can be used normally. If the test fails, the item does not retain the magical qualities the enchanter intended, but the enchanter may reuse the materials in another attempt to create a thread item. If the test yields a Pathetic result, the gamemaster may decide that the materials used in the ritual are ruined.

Gamemasters may allow characters to create new Thread Items with unique effects instead of limiting them to the item templates in the ***Player's Guide***. For more information and guidelines on how to develop new Thread Items, see the ***Gamemaster's Companion***.

General and Legendary Treasure

A more powerful form of Thread Item, General Treasure is rarer and more limited in number. It is not regularly produced by even seasoned enchanters and requires more exotic and harder to find materials. The gamemaster can allow player characters to craft the General Treasures found in the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** or create General Treasure of his own design, but the process of doing so requires more time, expenditures, and probably adventuring. Copying a General Treasure might require the character to first find instructions pertaining to its construction, while creating one on his own might require months or years of research. The specifics are left to the gamemaster, who is supposed to weave the process into his ongoing campaign in cooperation with the character's player.

Legendary Treasure cannot be created by enchanting, although on rare occasions player characters can have a hand in its creation. See the ***Gamemaster's Companion***.

Enchanting Techniques

Enchanters in the world of **Earthdawn** use a number of techniques to imbue an item with magical power, depending on their Discipline and the type of items they are about to enchant. Details of what technique is used in the creation of a specific item have been mentioned in the description of the Enchantment Types above, and are presented below in greater detail.

Weaving True Elements

True elements are often melded or woven into other objects to provide those items with some of the qualities of the element or elements. This weaving process delicately combines the elements together and "grounds" them as part of the material into which they are woven. This makes the elements considerably more stable and permits adepts to combine normally incompatible elements, such as True air and True fire or True air and True water, within an item. (For information on the properties of True elements and rules for gathering them, see **True Elements**, p. 158).

Adepts knowing the Elementalism Talent may learn the Weave Element talent knack that allows them to weave True elements into items.

Adepts make a Weave Element Test for each True element kernel they want to weave into an item. Weaving each kernel takes one hour. If a Weave Element Test fails, the enchanter has wasted an hour and accomplished nothing, though neither the kernel nor the item are damaged by the attempt.

The Difficulty Number for a Weave Element Test is based on the True element and the item's material, as listed on the Element Weaving Difficulty Table. Certain True elements and materials are less compatible, which makes weaving such combinations together more difficult. For example, True fire generally burns and consumes any material it contacts. Therefore, weaving True fire into most materials is extremely difficult.

Other elements and materials are completely incompatible and cannot be woven together under any circumstances. Any attempt to do so fails and consumes the material. These combinations are listed as "NA" on the table.

If weaving more than one True element into an item, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for each additional element. If any of the elements being combined by their nature cancel each other's effects (see the **Litany of Elements**, p. 159), add +2 to the Difficulty Number for each opposing element.

To enchant a warm cloak, Ardalon uses True air and True fire to generate the cloak's effect of providing heat and shielding the wearer from outside cold. First, he weaves the fire into the cloth, this requires a Weave Element (9) Test. Next, he weaves the air into the cloak, requiring a Weave Element (7) Test. Normally, the Difficulty Number to weave True air into cloth is 6, but as another True element is already present in the cloak, the Difficulty Number is increased by 1. This also shows that careful planning when weaving True elements makes the process easier—had Ardalon woven the True air in first, weaving in True fire would have required a Weave Element (10) instead of the Weave Element (9) Test.

Combining Magical Ingredients

While most techniques of enchanting rely on magical materials to imbue an item with magical power, the materials required are not very specific. For example, weaving one of the True Elements into an item can be the means to fuel a large variety of magical effects and can produce a great number of different magic items; it is only the enchanter's skill at manipulating magic that produces the item's specific effect. The magical materials are more a source of power than a part of the effect in these cases. However, the Technique of Combining Magical Ingredients uses very specific ingredients (as opposed to materials) to achieve effects based on these ingredients. The most basic process of combining ingredients with magical properties to evoke magical effects is Alchemy (see the **Alchemy** skill on p. 91 of the ***Player's Guide***), a skill available even to non-adepts. In this simple form, it is mundane knowledge and experience of generations rather than magical prowess that determines the quality of the resulting item.

However, magicians use magical ingredients in the construction of more powerful magic items, even threaded items. In this capacity, magical ingredients lend the item some of its power, similar to

ELEMENT WEAVING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Element	Cloth/ Leather	Water	Wood	Stone	Metal
True Air	6	8	9	11	13
True Earth	6	NA	8	6	7
True Fire	9	NA	10	13	15
True Water	8	6	9	11	NA
True Wood	6	NA	6	NA	NA

True elements, and represent a conduit for the magician to channel more magical energy into the item during the enchanting process. Just like when using ingredients for Alchemy, the ingredients used for an item determine what enchantments it can have—or the other way around: the desired enchantment requires fitting ingredients for efficient enchanting. For example, wyvern-skin armor requires wyvern hides (hence the Name), just as a healing potions made with the Alchemy skill are based on herbs with healing properties. Most often, ingredients for powerful items are taken from dangerous magical creatures or rare gems, minerals, and plants infused with the magical energy of a mystic location. Because the ingredients, while giving direction to a magical effect, do not contain a lot of raw magical power, orichalcum is often used to augment the item.

Creating Permanent Spell Patterns

Spells can be used as a basis for the effects of an item. The enchanter needs to know the spell in question, which is then integrated into the item's pattern during the enchanting process. Using spells in this manner is a method of determining the item's effects, but not enough to power the item's magic. Magical ingredients are still required, but as the effect is determined by the spell, can be generic, such as orichalcum. For example, a bedroll of comfort normally requires True Air to be woven into it to achieve its effect. However, a caster knowing the Air Mattress spell could use this spell as a means of achieving the effect of the item, and use the more versatile orichalcum to power the item, instead of True Air.

Items that are imbued with tasked spirits and Thread Items containing a matrix that allows the wielder to either cast a spell or access to an ability based on a spell also frequently require the use of this technique. Enchanting items through the use of spell patterns is very versatile, as any effect available to a spell can be made the effect of an item.

This technique of Enchanting is not to be confused with the casting of Named Spells (p. 132), Named Spells do not require Enchanting Tests or magical materials, but are paid for with Legend Points.

Spirit Binding

Magicians may also enchant an item by placing a spirit within the item's pattern. This technique, known as spirit binding, is practiced by Elementalists and Nethermancers using the Bind Spirit talent knack (p. 122). This technique is not normally required by any of the **Enchantment Types** (p. 155), but can be used on its own or to further enhance a Thread Item.

By binding an elemental or ally spirit to a magical item, a magician gains constant access to the spirit's powers and conceals the spirit's presence.

To bind a tasked, elemental, or ally spirit to an item, a magician must first obtain an item made with orichalcum and other magical materials or craft one himself. Only an item fashioned with such materials will successfully hold a spirit. The item may be virtually anything, but well-crafted items are more likely to prevent a trapped spirit from escaping. Once the magician has the finished item in his possession and has summoned the spirit, the adept must perform a special ritual to bind the spirit to the item. This ritual takes a half hour to complete. If the spirit is not cooperative, the magician must restrain it for the duration of the ritual, using a talent such as Elemental Hold, Spirit Hold, or Summoning Circle, or a spell such as Restrain Entity.

At the end of the ritual, the magician makes a Bind Spirit Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. Modify the Difficulty Number by the enchanting modifiers used in preparing the item. If the test succeeds, the spirit is bound to the item: the spirit's physical manifestation (if any) vanishes and its astral form (and consciousness) is trapped within the item's pattern.

The magician who trapped the spirit may communicate with it by touching the item and using a talent such as Spirit Talk or Elemental Tongues. The magician may also use any of the spirit's powers or abilities by touching the item. For example, a magician who has trapped a fire elemental in a sword could use the spirit's Spear power by grasping the weapon and using the spirit's Step Numbers to make any tests required for the use of that power.

The magician must also take any Strain or other damage required by the use of the spirit power. Any other character who comes in contact with an item containing a bound spirit can attempt to communicate with the spirit if he possesses an appropriate ability. Characters other than the enchanter who trapped the spirit must defeat the trapped spirit in a Contest of Wills in order to use the spirit's powers. Some thread items with a spirit bound to them allow their wielder access to the spirit's powers without this contest of wills if it is granted in the item's Rank Effects.

Spirits of all sorts greatly resent being trapped and will do all in their power to escape from being imprisoned in an item. If a bound spirit wins a Contest of Wills against a would-be master, the spirit may attempt to escape from the item by making a Spellcasting Test against the Summoning step of the magician who trapped it. The spirit incurs a penalty equal to the Enchanting Modifier (p. 155) of this test. If the test succeeds, the spirit is freed. The spirit also becomes free if the item in which it is trapped is destroyed or broken beyond repair. Threaded items with spirits bound to them make it harder for the spirit to escape. The spirit incurs an additional penalty to its Spellcasting Test equal to the Thread Rank woven by the current wielder. This, in addition to the fact that some threaded items circumvent the contest of wills, makes it highly unlikely for spirits to escape threaded items, so spirits stay clear of any enchanter of whom they know.

True Elements

The True elements are the magical essences of the five elemental planes—air, earth, fire, water and wood—concentrated into physical form on the material plane. These highly magical substances form the basis of many of the magical arts in the world of **Earthdawn**. Magicians make extensive use of a rare form of True earth known as orichalcum in magical work.

A single unit of a True element is known as a kernel, so called because it is similar in size to a kernel of corn. The exact size of an elemental kernel may vary, depending on the purity and strength of the sample. Very pure kernels of True elements are usually quite small but offer great magical power.

True elements occur in places where the barriers between the physical world and the elemental planes are thinnest. In such places, small portions of the magical essences of the elements collect in a material form that can be gathered using specific techniques.

True air is found high in the sky and in high places of powerful winds, such as lofty mountaintops. It usually appears as small swirls of pure, cold air that almost scintillates. True earth is found deep in the ground or sometimes on the sides of mountains where it has been exposed by natural geological activity. It usually appears as semi-translucent crystal of varying gemlike colors. True fire is found in places of great heat or burning, such as the Death's Sea and volcanoes. On rare occasions it forms in large forest fires or other conflagrations. True fire appears as a flame or point of near-blinding red-white light. True water is found deep in the sea, at the surface of storm-tossed seas (lifted from the depths), at the bottom of rushing rivers (or in their rapids) or in waterfalls. It appears as pure, cold water that sparkles more brightly than natural water. True wood is found only in the deepest primeval forests. It is the rarest of the True elements because of the devastation wrought

by the Horrors and the resulting corruption of places such as the Poison Forest. Despite the corruption of its inhabitants, the Blood Wood remains an excellent source of True wood.

The True elements combine with each other in various ways based on their natures. Each element can be neutralized by one of the other elements as described in *The Litany of the Elements*, an ancient oral tradition taught to Elementalists throughout Barsaive:

Wood destroys Earth, by covering it.
Fire destroys Wood, by burning it.
Water destroys Fire, by quenching it.
Air destroys Water, by drying it.
Earth destroys Air, by smothering it.

Any time a portion of a True element is combined with an equal part of its opposing element, the first True element is destroyed. When combined, some of the True elements, such as True fire and True air, can produce spectacular and explosive results. Because of this potential, kernels of True elements are always stored separately from one another.

Except for True wood, True elements must be stored in containers made of orichalcum. True water can be stored briefly in non-orichalcum containers, but after two or three days the True water will begin seeping through the container.

PROPERTIES OF TRUE ELEMENTS

Each True element contains unique magical properties. By weaving a True element into an item, a craftsman can give that item the True element's properties.

True air allows items such as small flight daggers, flying carpets, and even the massive stone airships of the Theran Armada to float or fly. True air also has cooling properties and can provide the air needed to survive harsh conditions. These properties are incorporated in items such as cooling stones, message stones designed to recall sounds, and effervescent liquids that enable a user to breathe underwater for short periods.

True earth has properties of solidity and strength. This element endows items with great durability and resistance to magic, and is used to strengthen stone, metal, and other earth-based materials in construction and forging.

Living crystal is a form of elemental earth that grows in deep subterranean pockets or along exposed mountain slopes. In Barsaive, living crystal is found and mined almost exclusively in the Twilight Peaks, though it has been found in the Scytha and Caucavic mountains as well. Living crystal occurs in a rainbow of different colors and opacities, from clear and colorless to dark and almost opaque. Normally, living crystal grows quite slowly. Individual crystals may grow for years or even decades before reaching any significant size. However, certain magic and alchemical processes speed the growth process. Living crystal is used for many magical items, especially items that employ blood magic to tap into the user's own life energies. Typically, the crystal is used in blood charms, types of living armor, and some of the thread items found among the crystal raiders of the Twilight Peaks.

True fire provides heat, light, and energy. Kernels of True fire and water woven together with living crystal create the light quartz used in kaers and cave exploration. Craftsmen also use True fire for household items such as firestarters and cooking pots, and in the fire engines that drive t'skrang riverboats and fuel fire cannons. Adepts often temper True fire with another element, such as True water, to keep its power in check.

True water is a cooling, refreshing, and resilient medium. Craftsmen use it to create items of great suppleness and flexibility, to waterproof objects, and to craft moisture barriers. True water is also used to soften True earth and make it more pliable, and woven with True air to take advantage of the combined cooling and soothing properties of the two elements.

Generally, craftsmen use **True wood** to make items that are strongly tied to life, such as shepherd staves, scarecrows, and other farm implements. Often associated with items of knowledge and beauty, magicians use this element for items such as runic sticks, magical tablets, and writing instruments. Though magicians rarely combine True wood and other True elements, certain craftsmen create exceptional musical instruments by weaving together a combination of True air and True wood.

Gathering and Mining True Elements

True elements can be collected in two ways: gathering and mining. Gathering involves collecting kernels of the True element by hand when using half-magic, a painstaking technique used only by Elementalists. Mining requires the use of special equipment made from orichalcum, and also involves considerable effort and potential danger.

The Therans use slaves for their large-scale element-mining operations because of the many hazards involved.

True air miners use fine-mesh orichalcum nets to catch and hold kernels of True air. They deploy such nets from airships sailing through a storm or an area of very high winds. As kernels of True air land in the nets, the miners transfer the True element to orichalcum containers. Because True air must be mined in stormy and windy conditions, skilled Air Sailors are in great demand to guide mining ships. Despite this precaution, fierce storms often destroy the wooden ships used by Barsaivian miners. The stone airships favored by Theran air miners generally fare better, but even these vessels occasionally go down in a storm or come under attack from elemental creatures that slip through the spaces between the physical and elemental worlds.

Barsaivians used True earth to magically reinforce the protective walls of kaers and citadels during the Scourge, but the True element is also a common component of a wide variety of ordinary magical items. True earth is the least hazardous True element to mine and can be collected using various traditional mining techniques. True earth also tends to be the least powerful True element per kernel, however, and bulk mining only yields large numbers of low-potency kernels. Careful direct gathering yields smaller, more potent kernels, which usually appear as valuable gemstones.

Mining True fire requires special tools crafted from orichalcum, which True fire miners use to scoop up fire kernels. True fire kernels must be immediately transferred to containers of solid orichalcum, as they burn through any other material. In one method of mining True fire, fire miners use airships to skim the surface of the Death's Sea and cast kernels of True air onto its molten surface. The True air causes explosions in the fiery sea that often stir up new pockets of True fire. This technique produces quite lucrative results, but the hazards of the sea itself and its deadly creatures claim many mining ships and crews—a possible drawback to offset the advantages. Other crews mine True fire in active volcanoes, where they face dangerous creatures as well as overwhelming heat and toxic fumes.

ELEMENT GATHERING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Element Gathered	Difficulty Number
True Air	10
True Earth	6
True Fire	12
True Water	10
True Wood	8

True water miners cast orichalcum-laced nets into deep waters to dredge kernels of True water from the depths. The miners then transfer the kernels to decanters of orichalcum, or to ordinary jars or bottles for short periods of time. As do all miners of True elements, True water miners must brave hazardous conditions in unknown waters, dangerous aquatic creatures, and pirates eager to capture a valuable cargo.

The limited availability of True wood prevents entrepreneurs from mining this element. Instead, it must be collected according to a special gathering ritual, usually from virgin forests and jungles protected by dangerous predators or fierce tribes.

Gathering Tests

To gather a True element, an Elementalist must first locate a deposit of the element. Finding a deposit of a True element requires careful research, a little prospecting, and some luck. Because most known deposits of True elements have been claimed long ago by miners and magicians, many Namegivers roam Barsaive for years, vainly searching for a mother lode of True elements that will make them rich. Adepts attempting to acquire material from established elemental deposits must first deal with any existing claimants to the area.

Elementalists can determine if a given area is likely to yield a True element by making a Perception-based Half-Magic Test against a Dif-

ficulty Number based on the Elementalist's familiarity with the region. The Difficulty Number for this test ranges from 6 (if the Elementalist knows the area well) to 15 or more (if he is looking at the locale on a map for the first time). If the test succeeds, the Elementalist knows whether or not the area will produce True elements.

Once an Elementalist has located a source of True elements, he can make a second Perception-based Half-Magic Test, against the appropriate Difficulty Number shown in the Element Gathering Difficulty Table, to gather the elements. A Gathering Test requires one full day. The adept gathers one kernel of the True element for each Result Level he achieves on the Gathering Test, starting with an Average Result (an Average result yields one kernel, a Good result yields two kernels, and so on).

Orichalcum

Orichalcum is a rare, unique form of True earth that contains the essences of all of the True elements. It has a rich, natural orange-gold color and can be worked and polished to a bright finish much like silver or gold. Orichalcum is a fairly soft metal, but Weaponsmiths often alloy it with harder materials, such as bronze or iron, to produce enchanted weapons of great strength.

Orichalcum occurs naturally in those rare areas where deposits of the five True elements interact, such as volcanic mountain peaks and the regions near the Death's Sea. Orichalcum can also be created magically by combining the True elements according to secret rituals and formulas that are carefully and jealously guarded by the adepts who know them.

Because it contains all of the True elements, orichalcum is a highly magical material that, combined with other materials, produces magical items more powerful than those created using only one or two of the True elements. Adepts in Barsaive also favor orichalcum as a component for enchanting, because items fashioned with this elemental metal easily hold even the most powerful enchantments. The metal can also be treated to make it highly resistant to magic. When prepared in this manner, orichalcum makes an ideal material for anti-magical armor and for containers designed to hold volatile magical elements.

Mining Orichalcum

Orichalcum occurs naturally in areas of volcanic activity or near deep veins of True earth. Skilled prospectors and miners typically look for formations of True earth when searching for orichalcum. The Orichalcum Wars that took place prior to the Scourge prompted a massive search for the metal, and many of Barsaive's largest orichalcum deposits were claimed during this resource rush. Given the value of the metal, discovery of any new orichalcum deposits undoubtedly will attract the attention of powerful groups and individuals intent on claiming the ore. For this reason, gamemasters may want to strictly control the appearance of new orichalcum deposits in their game.

If the gamemaster chooses to allow the player characters to find an unclaimed orichalcum source or mine an existing deposit, the adepts may use standard mining techniques to recover the raw orichalcum. Once recovered, the raw metal must be carefully purified for magical use by an Elementalist using a Half-Magic Test. The base Difficulty Number for the test is 6. Add +1 to the Difficulty Number for every orichalcum kernel in it. For example, refining an amount of raw orichalcum equaling 10 kernels requires a successful Half-Magic (16) Test.

The Half-Magic Test requires one week of uninterrupted time. If the test fails, the raw orichalcum is rendered useless for all magical purposes, including the creation of magical items and containers to hold True elements.

Creating Orichalcum

Adepts may also magically combine True elements to create orichalcum. The adept melts ore samples of True earth in a forge heated by True fire burning True wood, fired by bellows that drive in puffs of True air. The adept works the molten material with special rituals and then cools it in True water to form orichalcum.

This is done through use of the Create Orichalcum talent knack, available to Weaponsmiths and Elementalists (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 123). This method takes a considerable investment of time, but is relatively safe.

To begin, the character must obtain equal amounts of the True elements. The combined value of the elements equals the value of the orichalcum produced. Next, the adept makes a Create Orichalcum (6) Test. Add +1 to the Difficulty Number for every kernel of orichalcum that will be produced. If the test succeeds, the ritual produces the desired orichalcum in one month of uninterrupted time. If the test fails, the ingredients are wasted, but there are no other side-effects (like an explosion).

During this period, the adept cannot adventure or undertake any other activities other than eating, sleeping, and light reading and must be in good health—he must be free of damage or Wounds. The adept may also meditate to improve talents, perform Karma rituals, and learn spells during this time, but he cannot train for a higher Circle.

Other ancient methods of creating orichalcum are rumored to exist, but carry with them warnings of explosion or other disasters should they be employed inappropriately.

Uses for Orichalcum

Most commonly, orichalcum is used for a broad variety of magical enchantments, especially the manufacture of magical items. Though orichalcum coins are minted in much the same way as other money, they are rarely used for currency. The symbol of the coin allows characters to use the orichalcum in various magical rituals such as training pledges, and the orichalcum tithing performed by Elementalists.

Orichalcum is also used for containers designed to hold magical materials such as True elements, as well as in the containment vessels of fire cannons. Therans also use orichalcum to produce magic-resistant chains for imprisoning adepts and magicians.

Purchasing True Elements

Although True elements are difficult to obtain, some merchants offer them for purchase. Prices vary per kernel, as shown in the True Element Kernel Costs Table.

True elements are considered to have a Rare or Very Rare Availability, reflecting the difficulty of creating or mining the element, and are normally only offered for purchase from the largest markets, such as those found in cities.

TRUE ELEMENT KERNEL COST TABLE

True Element	Cost per Kernel	Availability
True Air	50–100	Very Rare
True Earth	5–10	Rare
True Fire	50–100	Very Rare
True Water	5–10	Rare
True Wood	25–50	Very Rare
Orichalcum	500–1,000	Very Rare

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

PASSIONS & QUESTORS

The Passions lie between Namegivers and the universe. They are all the emotions that dwell within us and all the emotions we share with the world.

• Forthian, Questor of Floranuus •

The following is an extract from Men and the Passions: What Lies Between. *Written in 1500 TH by Daron Highwater, dwarf Troubadour and questor of Mynbruje, this text explains the complex relationships between the people of Barsaive and the Passions.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

The Passions shape the spiritual beliefs and customs of Barsaive's people. According to many of Barsaive's finest scholars, the Passions are living embodiments of the life force of the universe, giving shape and form to the collective emotions and ideals of the world such as Love, Wealth, or Growth. As the universe nurtures an adept to keep the energies of life alive in the world, so the Passions nourish the many people who cannot find the strength or patience to become adepts or magicians. The Passions serve as intermediaries between these common folk and the awesome power of the universe.

Those who channel the power of the Passions are called questors. These men and women draw their extraordinary powers from the Passions, rather than directly from the universal life force. The life force of the universe flows through the Passions, who transmit this power to their questors. These questors, in turn, bring the Passions to the common folk across the world. Following a Passion gives a questor the same kind of focus an adept receives by following the tenets of his Discipline. The questor's life becomes a living metaphor for the ideals embodied by his chosen Passion; throughout his life, he expresses those ideals in his every word and action. Most questors fervently and vividly live out this commitment, adding as much color and energy to the world as magicians and adepts.

Most observers assume that what we know of the Passions holds true for the world outside Barsaive. It would be odd indeed if the universe interacted with our world in different ways from place to place. Yet ours is an odd world, and perhaps the universe's connection to it does change. The Passions we know in Barsaive may not exist on the other side of the globe; other Passions as yet unknown may take their place. More likely, men and women in distant lands know the same Passions but call them by different names. Whatever the truth, the reader will find in these pages all that we know of the Passions of Barsaive.

THE NATURE OF PASSIONS

Potent beings, the Passions have powers that dwarf the magical talents of adepts and the spells of magicians. Though they exist on the physical plane, the Passions possess abilities that enable them to travel at incredible speeds, sometimes by traveling as winds, sometimes by taking the forms of eagles or hawks. Some can even transport themselves by simple thought.

The Passions physically exist in our world and sometimes interact with it directly as well as through their questors. For example, many adventurers tell stories of meeting the Passion Thystonius while traveling along the road. Sometimes a group of explorers wandering through a forest or across a dusty plain stumbles across a humble hut or a huge fortress that houses a member of Barsaive's pantheon. The Passions move these homes around with them, setting up residence for a period of time that may last anywhere from a day to a year or more. On occasion, a Passion welcomes a polite knock at his door. Other times, visitors had best keep well away.

Stories and legends hold that the Passions care nothing for Barsaive's political alliances and rivalries, and most of their documented behavior supports this belief. They champion neither the dwarf kingdom of Throal nor the magical empire of Thera because they believe the conflict between these two mighty states generates the passions and adventures of life that the universe craves. Though they do not intercede in worldly conflicts on their own, they will eagerly support any side that calls to them for help. The Passions bring their powers to these conflicts through the questors, their human agents. If a questor sides with you, his Passion supports your cause, and the power the questor brings can make the difference between victory and defeat. If the situation demands it, the Passions are known to send more powerful servants than their questors. Despite their appearance, these servants aren't Namegivers—no one knows what type of creature they are, but they are generally referred to as the Passions' avatars. Avatars can take many forms, including that of a harbinger (see **Harbingers** in the ***Gamemaster's Companion***).

For years scholars and historians have debated the true appearance of the Passions. If one travels throughout Barsaive and asks people to describe the Passion Thystonius, one will receive a variety of answers. Humans describe a tall man with a flowing black beard and piercing blue eyes. Trolls tell of a troll carrying a warhammer as heavy as a boulder. Dwarfs speak of a massive dwarf, standing 50 feet tall, who makes his home in the Throal mountains. These differences in appearance are not confined to race, but encompass gender and other aspects of physical appearance. For example, many people think of the Passion Garlen as a woman, because she is depicted as female in the many statues gracing kaers and villages across Barsaive. But if Garlen comes to them in dreams, often during the deepest crises of their lives, they see the Passion as a man.

Most observers believe these varied appearances occur because a Passion tailors its physical form to the individual who sees it,

so that the individual can easily recognize the ideals and forces embodied by the Passion and will be receptive to its message. However, all the manifestations of a Passion contain certain identifiable, common elements, described later in this chapter.

Scholars continue to debate whether or not the Passions have a "true" appearance. So far no one has formulated a definitive answer, and many believe the mystery may never be solved. Most people do not care to know, believing that the true forms of the Passions remain hidden for good reason.

The Passions in Conflict

Before the Scourge, the Passions appear to have wasted little energy fighting among themselves. They did not compete for followers, nor did they exhibit jealousy of each other. Instead, they focused their vast power on bringing their particular ideals to the people of the world. The variety of human nature ensured that none lacked followers, and the Passions seem to have existed in mutual harmony.

The Scourge changed this, as it altered or destroyed so much else good and beautiful in Barsaive. Those dark times apparently drove three of the twelve Passions mad, and these three now work toward the destruction of the other Passions. No longer content with inspiring fervor and embodying ideals for mortals, these Mad Passions selfishly desire power and influence as mortals might. Fortunately for the world, the Mad Passions also share the mortal characteristic of distrust. Though sometimes the Mad Passions work together to accomplish their goals, more often they work alone or against each other.

The remaining Passions, unaccustomed to either cooperation or competition, have only just begun to respond to the threat posed by the Mad Passions. As far as we know, these beings seldom fight their crazed counterparts directly. Instead, they throw their questors and followers against those who follow the Mad Passions. The conflict among the Passions has sown strife among their mortal followers; though they seldom fought over their differences in the past, the presence of the Mad Passions has triggered ideological skirmishes across the land that may yet lead to a full-scale war.

The danger the Mad Passions pose to the world remains uncertain. Some contend the Passions will meet in final battle and wreak destruction across the earth that will dwarf the devastation of the Scourge. Others claim the insanity that possesses the Mad Passions will render them impotent in the long run, and expect them to fade away like the many arrogant, mortal dictators before them. Only time can tell whether the Mad Passions will destroy the world, or simply depart from it.

Worship of the Passions

The people of Barsaive hold spiritual beliefs based on their faith in the Passions, but no Barsaivian race or community has established a formal religious institution. The Passions apparently have chosen to propagate their ideals through their questors rather than through institutions or written laws that are vulnerable to error and misinterpretation. As a result, none of the Passions has any organized following, though questors of a particular Passion often meet to discuss their experiences or even form small bands to achieve a common purpose. Both practices are fairly common in the Kingdom of Throal.

Though the people of Barsaive do not form organized religions centered on the Passions, they do worship the Passions. Most believe in all the Passions, appealing to whatever Passion best meets their current needs.

Some people, including the questors, worship one Passion over the others. Though they recognize the existence of other Passions, they believe the ideals of their chosen Passion are superior. These worshippers often express their beliefs by stating that they follow the ideals of their chosen Passion. For example, a farmer who worships Jaspree might say, "I follow the ideals of Jaspree." Many questors make such statements, the most common method of declaring worship.

Namegivers rarely declare a belief in only one of the Passions. Most people accept the entire pantheon of Passions and would fear losing a Passion's protection by proclaiming that they did not believe in it. Most people invoke different Passions depending on their current circumstances. For example, a family hiding in their shuttered home while a pack of hungry wolves howls outside might seek the protection of Garlen, the Passion of the Hearth and Healing. If a family member ventures outside with sword in hand to slay the predators, the family might invoke Thystonius, the Passion of Physical Conflict and Valor.

Harbingers

Countless legends tell of the Passions visiting Namegivers in times of great need or rewarding those faithful individuals who live with a particular Passion's ideals in their hearts. However, legends rarely speak of the dire consequences that befall those who anger the Passions. Only a few people have seen what happens; the angered Passions deal with such miscreants by sending a special kind of avatar: a fearsome creature known as a harbinger (see the **Creatures** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Compendium***).

One of the best-known tales of a Namegiver who angered the Passions is the legend of Naka. Naka farmed a small plot of land in the ancient Kingdom of Landis, long before the Scourge. For years Naka worked his field. The Namegiver never enjoyed the profits that some of his fellow farmers earned, but neither did he ever go hungry. He largely kept to himself and never spoke ill of others. Over time, however, Naka grew resentful of his neighbors' successes. Slowly his resentment grew, like a black tumor in his heart. Then one day a terrible storm darkened the skies over Landis. Naka went out into the fields of his neighbors, and invoking the Name of Garlen, Passion of the Hearth, he offered his fellow farmers shelter in his large house. He offered them warm food and wine, and soon all of them had fallen asleep. Then Naka massacred them and stole their valuables. Only days later, Naka met his end at the feet of an unknown giant; an ethereal-looking, armored knight. Nothing is known about this knight, but people whisper that he was sent by Garlen herself.

Passion Descriptions

The following descriptions reflect the common understanding of the Passions. However, our knowledge of these mysterious and powerful beings is almost certainly neither complete nor entirely correct.

Each entry offers a brief description of each Passion's nature and personality, followed by a list of the ideals, typical appearance, and common elements associated with each Passion. **Ideals** represent the universal concepts and emotions the Passion embodies; the Passion's questors focus on these qualities. **Typical Appearance** describes the Passion's usual manifestation. **Common Elements** include sights, sounds, textures, and other phenomena that usually accompany any manifestation of the Passion. These common elements often appear in the dreams of an individual thinking about the Passion or the ideals it embodies, and the presence of such common elements may also indicate that the Passion is nearby or easily summoned. **Powers** refers to the unique, personal abilities each Passion possesses.

The **Questors** section describes the typical appearance and behavior of each Passion's questors. **Acts of Devotion** shows example acts of devotion that embody the ideals of a Questor's patron Passion. Lastly, **Questor Powers** lists the three primary powers this Passion offers to its questors.

Astendar

Astendar is the living muse of romance and the arts. Tales abound of artists paid a visit by Astendar who spent a feverish night alternately working at the easel and making love with the Passion. Such a gift of inspiration is not lightly given, and a visit from Astendar usually marks an individual for greatness.

Astendar also takes an interest in lovers, both young and old. One well-known incident involved a widow and widower who wanted to marry. Their children, however, believed their respective parents

too old for romance and discouraged the courtship. Kept locked in their houses by their children, the couple appealed to Astendar for help. The Passion heard their pleas and agreed to aid them if they created a painting together. At first, the couple had no idea how they might do this, for they could not meet or see each other. Driven by their longing to marry, they finally came up with a plan.

The couple hired a thief adept they knew to carry a canvas back and forth between their two houses. Every night for many weeks, one of them added to the painting, and the thief carried it off to the other house just before dawn. As the painting neared completion, the lovers found themselves waiting more and more anxiously every night to see the other's handiwork. Slowly but surely, Astendar's painting turned a solid friendship and gentle affection into excitement, anticipation, and deepening love. At long last they finished the picture, astounded by the beauty of their work. The exquisite painting so pleased Astendar that she made the couple young once more. Bolstered by their renewed strength, they broke free of their imprisoning homes and ran away together. As for the thief, he was rewarded with the painting, which he sold for a handsome price.

Ideals

Love, Art, Music

Typical Appearance

Astendar commonly manifests as a powerfully built male or female of any race, wearing few garments and carrying a musical instrument.

Common Elements

Light rain, music, beautiful clothing of intricate textures

Powers

Astendar can entrance listeners with music, instill lust or love, restore youth, and transform into the sound of a song and float through the air, leaving the melody in her wake.

Astendar's Questors

Artists make up the largest percentage of questors of Astendar. These questors find sensual pleasures such as gourmet food, luxurious clothing, or a lingering kiss fascinating. Their determination to imitate Astendar by indulging their desires often leads them into trouble.

Because they know their actions are inspired by their Passion, they naively believe everyone else will see their actions in the same light. Sadly, others usually view the indulgences of questors of Astendar as decadence unchecked by self-control or common sense.

Acts of Devotion

Create a work of art that requires one to four weeks of work (Minor). Deliver a love letter across a distance no less than five days' journey (Major). Become involved in a romantic affair that might end in bodily harm to the questor (Zealous). Find the perfect bride for the king or queen (Quest).

Questor Powers

Enchanted Gift, Instill Love, Return Youthful Spirit

Chorrolis

Chorrolis wanders the world, aiding those who want to strike a clever bargain or long for more wealth than they have. He inspires people to rise at dawn and work to improve their lot, and leaves them despairing if they go to bed at night without having succeeded.

Despite his status as a Passion and the extraordinary powers he possesses, Chorrolis brims over with jealousy and avarice. He covets anything of value or beauty that someone else owns, and his desire to possess such items often drives him to distraction. Because he scorns simple stealing as the act of a coward, Chorrolis must resort to other methods of acquisition. Bargaining is his method of choice. He has been known to hound the owner of a desired piece of merchandise for weeks at a time, turning up and offering a deal when the owner least expects it. Because he subtly disguises his appearance, most people do not recognize Chorrolis and eventually take the price he offers, desperate to be rid of the obsessive merchant following them around. Those who do recognize Chorrolis bide their time before selling, knowing that he will drive up his price to ridiculous heights. The patient trader can make a staggering profit by playing on Chorrolis' desperate desire.

Ideals

Wealth, Trade, Jealousy, Desire

Typical Appearance

Chorrolis often appears as a corpulent male of any race, either jovial or bitter and depressed. He wears fine clothes, and often carries silver and gold or beautiful and expensive objects around with him.

Common Elements

Bags of treasure, caravans, goods for sale, food

Powers

Chorrolis can incite greed, encourage cooperation in matters of trade, and travel instantaneously along any road or waterway used as a trade route.

Chorrolis' Questors

Questors of Chorrolis rise from the ranks of capable, usually greedy merchants. Some ply their trade from market stalls in Bartertown, while others satisfy their desire to imitate Chorrolis by traveling across Barsaive in trade caravans.

Chorrolis frequently inspires his questors to acquire specific objects that he treasures. Widely known for their unbeatable bargaining skills, the questors of Chorrolis usually conceal their devotion to the Passion in order to negotiate favorable deals with the unwary.

Acts of Devotion

Conduct trade involving goods valued at 50 silver pieces or more. The questor need not deal with every merchant he sees, but must negotiate at least one notable transaction every time he passes through a marketplace (Minor). Spend considerable time pursuing a rumor describing potential profit (Major). Secure a loan with outrageous interest rates and serious late-payment penalties in an attempt to make an extraordinary profit (Zealous). Obtain a rare and legendary object (Quest).

Questor Powers

Encourage Trade, Incite Greed, Locate Valuables

Dis (Mad Passion)

Known as Erendis before the Scourge, this Passion once stood for the ideals of Order, Bureaucracy and Work. Now, even with her warped ideals, Dis is a popular Passion among those who make their living from the Theran slave trade. Unlike the other Passions, Dis takes her greatest pleasure in destroying people's passion for life, rather than inspiring it. She bleeds away her worshippers' zest for living and they in turn demoralize those they subjugate. Eventually, the slaves and bureaucrats influenced by this Mad Passion become empty husks, devoid of dreams and feelings. Dis wants to extend this death of the soul throughout the world.

In addition to the slavers, Dis also inspires bureaucrats who create paperwork merely to look busy, rather than out of a need for the records or fondness for their work. Few activities spread boredom more effectively than generating useless records and information, and Dis spends a great deal of her time encouraging people to do just that.

Ideals

Confusion, Unnecessary Work, Complex Bureaucratic Hierarchies, Slavery and Mastery

Typical Appearance

Dis manifests as a thin, sickly male or female of any race, who seems to have been deprived of sunlight and exercise for far too long.

Common Elements
Papers, papers and more papers, contracts, tomes of ritual, slaves, chains

Powers
Dis can remove fervor from those around her and cause confusion in their minds, make people obey her will, and teleport instantaneously to any place she has visited before.

Dis' Questors
The questors of Dis imitate their Passion's desire for unimaginative uniformity by dressing in gray and making themselves look pale. Some questors of Dis seize or otherwise control mercantile bureaucracies or slaver operations in order to embody their Passion's ideals, living comfortably off the fruits of others' labors. Other questors of Dis seek nothing less than complete detachment from their fellow man and the human condition, thus exemplifying the disdain with which Dis views all living beings.

Acts of Devotion
Impose one's will on another sentient being (Minor). Create an obscure method of controlling information and work flow that offers no practical value (Major). Force a worthy opponent into slavery (Zealous). Set up a slave-trading network (Quest).

Questor Powers
Confusion, Enslave, Living Death

Floranuus
Floranuus is the perpetual optimist and the motivator of all Namegivers. He burns in the hearts of all who rise eagerly from their beds each morn to meet the new day. He inspires all people toward victory, and stands at the center of all celebrations.

As the embodiment of joy, mirth, and excitement, he lacks understanding of despair. He sends his questors to help the deeply depressed, knowing that they may empathize with such feelings in a way that he cannot.

Ideals
Revelry, Energy, Victory, Motion

Typical Appearance
Floranuus usually manifests as a humanoid shape composed of fire. However, the manifestation neither gives off heat nor burns any objects it touches.

Common Elements
Fire, parties, cheers, swift ships of both air and sea, wine, roads

Powers
Floranuus increases stamina, alters moods from depression to exhilaration, and can travel at breathtaking speed anywhere in the world as a ball of fire.

Floranuus' Questors
Because they feel a renewed optimism at the beginning of each new day, the questors of Floranuus actively encourage everyone around them to share their enthusiasm for living. These men and women find a silver lining in every cloud and recognize a positive aspect in even the most dire or depressing situations. The questors of Floranuus provide an instantly recognizable emblem of their Passion's ideals by wearing bold, bright colors that invariably cheer people up and inspire them to action of some sort. These questors spend their lives traveling across Barsaive seeking those who have lost hope, then doing all they can to revive a spark of joy in those souls.

Questors of Floranuus willingly go to whatever lengths seem necessary to light up the world around them as brightly as the flames of their Passion. Though many people grumble that questors of Floranuus are nothing but glorified busy-bodies, none question their benevolent motives or absolutely sincere desire to change people's lives for the better.

Acts of Devotion
Participate in or organize a race or other physical competition (Minor). Organize a celebration with at least 100 or more guests to require at least one week of work (Major). Raise your side's flag within enemy territory at the turning point of a battle (Zealous). End a war between two enemy communities or nations (Quest).

Questor Powers
Increase Speed, Increase Stamina, Speed Ship

Garlen

During the Scourge, all the kaers and citadels called on Garlen for protection, and she remains one of the most widely revered Passions in Barsaive. People of all races call her the mother who cares for all, and Garlen considers all of Barsaive's Namegivers her children. Garlen and her questors offer healing to the sick and injured, and comfort to the dying. In a world filled with violence and danger, Garlen watches over those who shun adventuring for the comfort and safety of home, particularly families and children.

Ideals
Hearth and Healing

Typical Appearance
Garlen usually manifests as a voluptuous woman, her arms spread wide in acceptance and invitation. On occasion, Garlen appears as a kindly, comfortable-looking man.

Common Elements
Homes, children, kaers, enclosed spaces, water

Powers
Garlen can heal the wounded, comfort the frightened, and travel instantly to any home.

Garlen's Questors

Many ordinary citizens and even some questors of other Passions mistakenly believe that Garlen's questors seek the refuge of the hearth and embrace healing because they fear conflict. Anyone who has watched someone they love die while doing everything in their power to prevent it knows that this act of caring requires a far greater courage and strength than that required to defeat any enemy.

Most questors of Garlen are female. Some believe that Garlen attracts women questors because she so often appears as one. Others speculate that because they carry new lives within their bodies, women possess a greater understanding and appreciation for life and greater compassion for other living beings.

Garlen's questors can be stern, but show unfailing generosity and understanding. Those who mistake Garlen's compassion for weakness sometimes do not live to regret their misunderstanding. For example, a famous story tells of five questors of Garlen who were visiting a village near Skypoint when Theran slavers raided the village. Garlen's questors cut down the Therans to the last man, staining their white robes with the slavers' blood.

Acts of Devotion
Heal someone suffering from a physical injury (Minor). Provide extended care for someone suffering from a serious illness (Major). Protect a home from attackers (Zealous). Find the cure for a terminal illness (Quest).

Questor Powers
Comfort, Heal, Seal Home

Jaspree

Countless Namegivers have invoked Jaspree's name during the past hundred years as people across Barsaive have revived farmlands and forests devastated during the Scourge.

Moved by his deep love of all growing things, Jaspree has answered the call of his followers. He wanders under the deep shadows cast by towering trees and stops to smell the smallest wildflowers that line Barsaive's well-traveled roads. Thanks to his aid, the world has grown green and rich with life in the years since the end of the Scourge.

Ideals
Growth, Care of the Land, Love of the Wilderness

Typical Appearance
Jaspree usually manifests as a male or female creature, half animal and half any Namegiver race.

Common Elements
Trees, farms, forests, seeds

Powers

Jaspree encourages growth in plants, animals and Namegivers; animates plants; speaks with animals; and travels through dirt as if swimming through water.

Jaspree's Questors

A majority of Jaspree's questors devote their Passion-given powers to nurturing small patches of Barsaive where plant life survived the Scourge, and to coaxing seemingly barren areas back to life. Questors of Jaspree recognize the intrinsic, basic value of plant life as the building block for all other life. They make a point of teaching this lesson to careless travelers and those who deliberately destroy their work, sometimes going so far as to trade a life for a life.

Other questors of Jaspree seek to protect the lives of animals and Namegivers as well as plant life. These questors defend the communities in which they live against marauders who would destroy any living thing, but understand that Namegivers need to sow fields in order to eat, and that some forests must die to support other life. They see life as an endless cycle of death and rebirth, and accept both as having equal worth.

Questors of Jaspree also embrace opportunities to travel to the far reaches of Barsaive and beyond to learn more about the plant life of the world, sow life in barren lands, and to protect endangered species of plant life.

Acts of Devotion

Plant seeds over a one-acre area (Minor). Nurture a farm or forest area for one week or more (Major). Protect a farm, forest area, or herd of animals from casual or deliberate harm (Zealous). Undo the effects of the Scourge to a considerable patch of land (Quest).

Questor Powers

Animate Plant, Command Animal, Plant Growth

Lochost

Lochost is the patron Passion of slaves, rebels, and scholars. The truly educated mind seeks the inspiration to break free from the beliefs of the past and make new discoveries, and so merits the protection of Lochost as surely as any freedom fighter.

The slow spread of Theran slavery across Barsaive has stretched Lochost's attention thinner and thinner, and he depends upon increasing numbers of questors to do his work. At the sight of the slavery she desires, the Mad Passion Dis often confronts Lochost, and she currently wields greater power than he. The two last fought at a slave camp near the citadel of Tirthon, killing every slave and slaver in their savage combat. Wishing to avoid a repeat of the massacre, Lochost spends a great deal of time distracting Dis as his questors work to free the enslaved.

Ideals

Rebellion, Change, Freedom

Typical Appearance

Lochost usually manifests as a male or female child of any race, whose body and features constantly change.

Common Elements

Strong wind, uprooted trees, open gates

Powers

Lochost inspires rebellion, comforts the imprisoned, unlocks doors and prisons, and can fly through the air by transforming into wind.

Lochost's Questors

Lochost's questors can be found anywhere in Barsaive that oppression or inequity rules. Many questors of Lochost agitate for change in pursuit of equality and Namegiver dignity, opposing Theran rule and slavery. Others propose political reforms in established communities and within the Kingdom of Throal, acting as devil's advocates in an effort to ensure that those in power continue to govern responsibly. Still others foment rebellion for the sake of change, imitating their Passion by constantly challenging the status quo.

As long as Thera practices slavery, questors of Lochost will actively oppose Thera's rule, sowing and nurturing rebellion in slave camps and mining operations throughout Barsaive and all over the world. All Therans accept the edict that questors of Lochost must be exposed and eradicated in order to preserve their lifestyle, and the Mad Passion Dis hunts Lochost relentlessly, determined to extinguish the light of his inspiration.

Acts of Devotion

Comfort a person enslaved against his will (Minor). Help someone who has escaped slavery (Major). Free an entire camp of slaves (Zealous). Convince a nation's leader to outlaw slavery (Quest).

Questor Powers

Break Shackles, Change Thoughts, Inspire Rebellion

Mynbruje

Mynbruje stands by the unjustly accused, those the law has passed over, and those misunderstood by their society. He is a busy Passion, for though the Namegivers occupy a special place in the universe, mere mortals are often blind to truth and understanding.

Ideals

Justice, Compassion, Empathy, Truth

Typical Appearance

Mynbruje usually appears as an old man or woman of any race.

Common Elements

Balanced scales, executioner's axe, stars, a comfortable place to rest

Powers

Mynbruje can read minds, ease the suffering of others, perceive obscure clues, and travel through the thoughts of Namegivers, leaping from the mind of one to any other within fifty miles.

Mynbruje's Questors

The questors of Mynbruje wear simple garments, sometimes peasant garb, to show that they care little for status or prestige. They imitate their Passion by devoting their lives to seeking truth and justice. They dedicate all their efforts to restoring balance to lives and communities, laboring to show criminals the error of their ways, helping society administer justice compassionately, and clearing the names of those wrongly accused.

Mynbruje's questors serve their Passion in many ways. Some act as official judges in citadels, towns, and villages. Others travel throughout Barsaive randomly or along a prescribed route, adjudicating disputes and righting injustices. Everyone accepts the word of a questor of Mynbruje as law, though such questors often travel with other adepts and magicians as protection against those who would seek to evade judgment.

Acts of Devotion

Ease an accused person's suffering (Minor). Reveal a falsehood (Major). Prove a criminal's guilt or a suspect's innocence (Zealous). Uncover and expose a conspiracy to murder a king or other high-ranking official (Quest).

Questor Powers

Ease Suffering, Increase Perception, Perceive Emotion

Raggok (Mad Passion)

Raggok was known as Rashomon before the Scourge, and his ideals then were Leadership, Endurance, Tolerance, and Perseverance. Today, Raggok is the most terrible of the Mad Passions, and embodies all that is corrupted in the world.

He causes the dead to walk the earth, he sows the baseless hatreds that erupt between once-loving husbands and wives, and he tortures the insane with disembodied voices. People say he has made countless pacts with Horrors, aiding them in their evil endeavors and receiving their assistance in kind. Like the Horrors he allegedly serves, Raggok loves to inflict pain and strives to satisfy this perverse desire.

Ideals

Vengeance, Bitterness, Jealousy

Typical Appearance

Raggok usually manifests as a large man with the head of a ram. Scores of open wounds continuously appear, heal, and reappear on the incarnation's bloody flesh.

Common Elements

Skeletons, the undead, swords, wounds, insects, snow and ice

Powers

Raggok can call forth painful memories, raise undead, inspire hatred, and travel through the thoughts of Namegivers, leaping from the mind of one Namegiver to any other within fifty miles. As he travels, he evokes painful memories in the minds of those he passes through.

Raggok's Questors

Because the ideals Raggok personifies can be found in the hearts of members of every race, this Mad Passion never lacks questors. People who enjoy inflicting mental and physical pain gladly imitate Raggok and accept his gifts in return.

Questors of Raggok divide themselves into two main groups based on their interpretation of how best to embody their Passion's

ideals. One group believes that ostentatious displays of wealth cause mental pain in others less fortunate and so wallows in all the pleasures of the flesh that money can buy. Their constant search for even more money and treasure provides the resources needed to pay others to glorify Raggok, consciously or unconsciously, through their actions.

The second group lives ascetic lives. These questors feel compelled to imitate Raggok personally to the best of their abilities, and believe that bringing pain to the world should take precedence over their own comfort. Any wealth they accumulate is used to buy poisons, hire mercenaries to raze villages, and accomplish other acts that cause pain and suffering.

Acts of Devotion

Cause someone pain in combat—this act of devotion is rewarded for one battle against one opponent, not each successful attack (Minor). Torture a victim with expert deliberation (Major). Kill someone in the name of revenge. The revenge may satisfy the questor's need for vengeance or simply fulfil a contract paid for by someone else (Zealous). Make an entire community suffer for the deeds of their ancestors (Quest).

Questor Powers

Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead

Thystonius

Thystonius is the Passion of physical conflict and valor. Most soldiers mistakenly believe him a Passion of war and try to claim him for their own, but Thystonius cares little for killing. He resides in living bones and muscles, not in the corpses of the fallen. He loves the flexing and exertion of bodies competing against the odds—a foot race, an arm wrestle, or a man swimming for his life against the impossible currents of the Serpent River give him infinitely more pleasure than the carnage of battle.

In addition to those who embrace him wholeheartedly, Thystonius rushes to aid those who feel daunted by a physical challenge. The epic poem "The War of Tears," recounts two camps of opposing warriors, both fearful of taking the battlefield the next day. Thystonius entered both camps during the night and spoke to each army, extolling the glories of war and promising the warriors they would all emerge heroes. Inspired by the Passion's words, both sides joined in vigorous combat the following morning. The Passion kept his promise—the warriors' heroic deeds were immortalized in the "The War of Tears." Nevertheless, Thystonius' habit of encouraging people to throw themselves at each other makes many people uncomfortable.

Ideals

Physical Conflict, Valor

Typical Appearance

Thystonius usually appears as a tall, muscular man or woman of any race.

Common Elements

Weapons, banners and pennants, armor, battlefields

Powers

Thystonius can increase martial abilities and strength, overcome pain, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any physical conflict.

Thystonius' Questors

Questors of Thystonius believe that diving headfirst into physical danger is the only way to fully experience life. Their primary motivation each day is to seek challenges and opponents to test their skills and valor. According to their vision of their Passion's ideals, they must encourage others to do the same and so engage willing opponents as often as unwilling ones.

Questors of Thystonius make valiant, tireless warriors, and leap to defend entire communities single-handedly, if necessary. While this quality makes these men and women valuable allies, they cannot be counted on to consider the effects of their actions before they join battle, and so rarely learn to lead troops.

Certain people, who are willing to do almost anything to avoid conflict, accuse questors of Thystonius of using their superior strength to force people to fight against their will, thus acting like overgrown bullies.

Acts of Devotion

Engage in a test of physical prowess; combat, leaping over a particularly wide chasm, and so on (Minor). Lead soldiers into battle (Major). Fight a powerful opponent until one or both combatants cannot continue (Zealous). Bring victory to a nation involved in a full-scale war (Quest).

Questor Powers

Absorb Damage, Increase Strength, Increase Initiative

Upandal

Upandal is the Passion of Construction. He reinforces the need to build shared by all the Namegiver races of Barsaive, helping them to create order and beauty by building structures as well as giving names.

Upandal gives aid where he can, inspiring architects and craftsmen and protecting beautiful cities and towers. On occasion, he presents enchanted tools to craftsmen he deems particularly worthy of his patronage.

Ideals

Building, Construction, Planning

Typical Appearance
Upandal generally manifests as a craftsman of any race, clad in dirty work clothes.

Common Elements
Hammer, building plans, compass, smith's forge

Powers
Upandal can make tools quickly; fortify buildings, fortresses and city walls; create temporary bridges and towers; and travel instantaneously between cities or any other large, ornate constructions.

Upandal's Questors
Questors of Upandal find their greatest joy in building, or collecting money for a construction project. They offer everything they build to the glory of Upandal, eagerly embracing each new structure as a way to enrich the world and win more questors for their Passion.

Not all their devotion is expressed on such a grand scale. Questors of Upandal find equal satisfaction in tinkering with, repairing, and reproducing small objects. They use every opportunity to express their devotion to their Passion and encourage others to join them in their quest. Whether helping a farmer repair a fence or fixing a child's toy, Upandal's questors do their best to imitate their patron Passion. Their analytical minds give Upandal's questors a penchant for devising war plans and other such designs. Unfortunately, their love of the complex and ornate tends to produce aesthetically pleasing but impractical strategies.

Acts of Devotion
Spend a week creating a new tool, weapon, or design (Minor). Help build a building, castle, or other structure that requires two to four weeks of work (Major). Protect a beautiful object—a mechanical jewelry box, an ornate tower, and so on—from those who would destroy it (Zealous). Create a legendary item (Quest).

Questor Powers
Create Structure, Create Weapon, Fortify Structure

Vestrial (Mad Passion)
Before the Scourge, Vestrial was the prankster Passion, blending good humor with trickery to puncture the overblown egos of the arrogant. Insanity took hold of him during the Scourge, however, making him as arrogant as the former victims of his jokes.

Seeing himself as the sole inheritor of all the world's Passion worshipers, he creates elaborate plans for world conquest that his questors enthusiastically carry out. He uses his vast intelligence to spin webs of intrigue that no one save himself can understand. Some believe that Vestrial has woven so many plots and deceits that even he has lost track of the ends he originally desired.

Ideals
Manipulation, Deceit

Typical Appearance
Vestrial usually manifests as a humanoid form, wearing a dark hood and cloak.

Common Elements
An assassin's dagger, blood, ambush

Powers
Vestrial can confuse listeners, beguile people with lies, discover a person's true desire, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any place where someone has just uttered a lie.

Vestrial's Questors
The questors of Vestrial scurry about the world dressed in the black cloaks of their Passion, carrying out the Mad Passion's schemes. Though questors of Vestrial apparently regularly sacrifice their real goals to the goal of fostering deceit in the name of their Passion's ideals, they should not be underestimated. For every ten questors that devote all their efforts to manipulating fellow Namegivers and events, one questor can be found guiding his fellows through brilliant, effective, diabolical plans.

The precision, subtlety, and effectiveness of some Vestrial-inspired plots suggests that the apparent incompetence of the most

visible questors provides a cover for countless unrecognized questors of Vestrial hidden within all levels of society.

Acts of Devotion

Lie to someone about a matter that is important to the person and has an effect on his life (Minor). Manipulate someone into doing something illegal, immoral, or otherwise wrong that they would not willingly do (Major). Create a lie that leads to someone's death, though the questor need not be present when the death occurs. The person who dies must have allies that will seek to avenge his death (Zealous). Create a conspiracy to murder a king or other high-ranking official (Quest).

Questor Powers

Deceit, Discover Desire, Manipulate Desire

Questors

Questors pledge themselves to one Passion. They dedicate their lives to it, trying to foster its ideals in the lives of all people. The characteristics of questors vary from Passion to Passion. Some general traits exist among most or all questors, as discussed below.

With the exception of those who follow the Mad Passions, questors with different patron Passions do not bear each other ill will. Each Passion embodies different ideals and emotions, and their questors understand that they are all equally significant parts of a whole that comprises the life of Namegivers.

Though the Passions do not directly support political factions or causes, questors can and often do. For example, many dwarf questors in Throal call Thystonius their patron Passion. Their questor order has a military nature, and they use gifts from Thystonius to give the Kingdom of Throal military protection. If other questors of Thystonius chose to attack Throal, such an act would bring questors of the same Passion into direct conflict with each other. Such a development would gladden Thystonius. Though he would mourn those killed in the conflict, the bravery of his questors on both sides would bring him great joy.

Patron Passions also bestow abilities on their questors. Like adepts, questors cultivate these abilities by focusing their lives around a certain behavior—in this case, spreading their Passion's ideals across Barsaive. Some of these abilities, such as Healing, are shared by the questors of several Passions. Others are unique to one Passion. As opposed to adepts, questors are generally respected and trusted throughout the land. Because adepts draw the immense power of the universe to themselves directly, most common folk are suspicious of them. Many view adepts, especially magicians, as presumptuous and arrogant. Questors, on the other hand, receive their power by working through the Passions, in whom nearly every inhabitant of Barsaive places trust. The people's warm regard for the Passions includes the questors, and they therefore enjoy the trust of most people. An old Barsaivian saying perfectly expresses these sentiments: "Hide from magicians, hire adepts, and say 'hello' to questors."

The name questor refers to someone who has devoted himself or herself to a spiritual quest. This quest usually begins late in life; after an adept becomes experienced in his Discipline, he is sometimes drawn to devote his life to mimicking one of the twelve Passions. The life of a questor does not earn him a living. Only the followers of Dis maintain a bureaucratic structure, and small, loosely organized groups sometimes form to discuss the creed of the Passion to which they have devoted their lives, but no formal institution exists to support questors' day-to-day needs. For example, two dozen questors of Thystonius in the Kingdom of Throal have organized themselves into an elite military unit called the Primus Guard. These questors support and strengthen each others' devotion to their chosen Passion, and often lend their considerable strength and experience to battles, but each of these adepts must make his own way in the world.

Questors sometimes live off the generosity of communities willing to support a strong questor in their midst, but most questors continue to practice the trade they learned in the early years of their lives. Adepts who become questors must try to reconcile the lifestyle and mindset of their Discipline and the actions required of a faithful questor. For some, this is easy. Many Swordmaster adepts have assumed a quest to be like Thystonius. If the two ways of thinking conflict, however, the adept questor must choose which to follow. For example, this conflict could arise for a Thief who is also a questor of Thystonius. The Thief mindset typically demands that he avoid open confrontation, while the ideals of Thystonius drive him to seek physical conflict. The questor mindset demands that he seek physical conflict. The more he relies on the Thief Discipline, the less he behaves like Thystonius, and so receives fewer rewards from the Passion. However, the more he tries to be like Thystonius, the less successful he will be as a Thief.

It might seem odd for adepts to devote their lives to a Passion so different in nature from their Discipline. However, because the Discipline of an adept in many ways limits how the adept sees the world and how he interacts with it, becoming a questor of a Passion of a different nature allows the adept to interact with the world in a way previously unknown.

Becoming a Questor

Every Namegiver can become a questor, adept and non-adept alike. Adhering to a Passion's ideals is the only thing all questors have in common—being a questor is a specific, directed quest a character undertakes in his life.

To become a questor, the character simply declares his intention (which must be approved by the gamemaster), and starts devoting his life to a single Passion, living that Passion's ideals and helping spread the influence of their patron Passion across Barsaive. In return, he gains access to the Questor talent. The Rank of the Questor talent serves as a measure of devotion, and supports the use of the powers granted to the questor by his patron Passion (see **Acts of Devotion**, p.470).

Player characters should not begin the game as questors because being a questor does not constitute a profession or Discipline in and of itself. Most adepts who become questors do so only after achieving a certain amount of experience in their chosen Discipline, usually after they reach the Fifth Circle or higher.

Choosing a Patron Passion

Strictly speaking, characters can choose to become questors of any of the twelve Passions. A questor never follows more than one Passion. Gamemasters should consider the potential problems inherent in following any of the three Mad Passions—Dis, Raggok, or Vestrial. While being a questor of one of these Passions offers excellent roleplaying challenges, it is important to remember that most Barsaivians fear and revile the Mad Passions and anyone associated with them. Even the Theran Empire only tolerates those who worship Dis, Passion of bureaucracy and slavery. Questors of these Passions would find even ordinary tasks such as buying supplies difficult, for most people will be unwilling to deal with them on any level.

A second issue is that those who devote their lives and energy to the Mad Passions usually oppose the ideals and goals of the heroes of **Earthdawn**. A questor of the Mad Passions could not easily join an adventuring group, and neither could the player who created him. The gamemaster should consider limiting questors of the Mad Passions to the role of antagonists, gamemaster characters who will work against the players' characters. The questor powers and Acts of Devotion described for the Mad Passions are

DEVOTION-BASED RANKS

Optional Rule: If you want to emphasize that a questor's powers are bestowed on him by his patron Passion in return for living out the Passion's ideals, use this optional rule.

Rather than paying Legend Points for increasing the Questor Talent Rank, the character automatically gains the maximum rank available for his Devotion Point total. This ties a questor's abilities more closely to his way of life and prevents players from getting frustrated when losing Legend Points if they fail to act (see **Failing to Act**, p. 471), since they don't have to repay the required number of Legend Points if they lose a rank.

provided so that gamemasters can create these questors as villains and other opposition.

Rather than accepting the ideals of the Mad Passions, questor characters may instead decide to attempt to heal one or more of the Mad Passions, an appropriate goal for a questor of the Passion Mynbruje, for instance. Such a goal would require years of adventuring to gain the talents and abilities needed to accomplish this task, for only the most powerful questor adepts would dare to directly involve themselves in the affairs of the Passions. Such a quest lends itself well to extended campaigns.

THE QUESTOR TALENT

The Questor talent alone does not give the character any special abilities, but is used as a measure of the questor's abilities as granted by his patron Passion. As the character increases the Rank of the Questor talent, the strength of his Passion-granted powers also increases. The Questor Rank simply provides a gauge by which both the player and gamemaster can describe how much power the Passion grants the questor. In game terms, as the questor performs acts of devotion worthy of his patron Passion, he can increase the Rank of his Questor talent (see **Acts of Devotion**, below). In the world of **Earthdawn**, as a questor performs acts worthy of his patron Passion, the Passion rewards him with greater power. Accumulating the right number of Devotion Points does not automatically increase the character's Questor Rank. The Devotion Point total only indicates the current maximum Questor Rank possible. Player characters purchase Ranks in the Questor talent, p.111, in the same way as they purchase Ranks for other Fifth Circle talents.

Questor Powers

When a character purchases the Questor talent at Rank 1, he receives the three basic questor powers listed with his patron Passion (see **Questor Powers**, p.472, and **Passion Descriptions** p.462). All powers are based on the questor's Questor Rank; purchasing a new Rank in the Questor talent increases all of the character's questor powers.

ACTS OF DEVOTION

In order to live out the ideals of their patron Passion, questors must act in ways that reflect their chosen path. That is, they are expected to take actions that support the ideals of their patron Passion. For example, a questor of Garlen is expected to heal those in need, while a questor of Upandal should be a builder of some sort, or regularly aid those whose goal is to construct something. By acting in a way that embodies the ideals of his patron Passion, a questor helps keep those ideals, and so the Passion, alive and real in the minds and hearts of the people of Barsaive. Players should feel free to create acts of devotion other than those listed for each Passion. Any act that demonstrates the ideals of a questor's patron Passion is appropriate, but the gamemaster must approve any new acts of devotion the player creates.

The gamemaster should feel free to control how powerful the questors in his game become by limiting or expanding the number of opportunities questors receive to perform acts of devotion. The total number available in any given adventure or campaign should include those opportunities the players create for their characters. The gamemaster is the final judge of how many Devotion Points any act of devotion is worth. To help gamemasters determine the scale of an act of devotion, we suggest the following four categories: **Minor Acts**, **Major Acts**, **Zealous Acts** and **Quests**. Examples of typical acts of devotion appear below, and examples of acts appropriate to each Passion appear in the descriptions of each Passion.

Devotion Point Awards

Acts of devotion are defined as actions that the character performs that imitate the spirit and ideals of the questor's Passion. Questors who perform acts of devotion are rewarded with Devotion Points. The gamemaster determines the scale of the character's act of devotion based on the examples given in the **Passion Descriptions** earlier in this chapter, awarding Devotion Points accordingly.

DEVOTION POINT AWARD TABLE

Type of Act	Devotion Points
Minor Act	0–50
Major Act	50–100
Zealous Act	100+
Quest	Special

Minor Act: The gamemaster should award the character any time the questor uses his talents, questor powers, skills, or other abilities to further the cause of the Passion in any way. Though this reward may seem small, a questor who regularly performs minor acts of devotion in accordance with the Passion's ideals and powers will accumulate Devotion Points quickly.

A questor of Garlen finds a wounded man lying next to the road. She stops and heals the man, restoring enough of his strength that he can continue his journey. He has enough supplies to reach his destination, and so the man and the questor go their separate ways.

Major Act: The gamemaster should award the questor each time he performs an act of devotion that involves time or effort, but does not actually put him in any danger.

A questor of Garlen discovers a man who has been severely wounded and left to die in the road. She stops and heals the man as best she can, but his wounds are serious, and he must rest in order to recover fully. The man lost all his possessions to the bandits who beat him. The questor brings the wounded man to an inn and pays the innkeeper for a room and enough food for a week. Having done all she can for this victim, the questor continues on her way.

Zealous Act: The gamemaster should award the questor for performing an act of devotion that puts him at risk while personifying his patron Passion. This risk does not need to be physical. For example, a questor of Chorrolis, the Passion of trade, might risk a large sum of capital in a deal. If the risk could potentially break

the questor's influence and power, Chorrolis would take notice and reward the character. Questors of the Passion Thystonius, whose ideals embody the virtue of physical risk, must face almost certain death to receive this reward.

The questor of Garlen who rescues the wounded man discovers that the bandits who attacked him now seek to finish their work and kill him, though she does not know why. Rather than settling him at the inn and leaving, she stays and fights to defend both the man and the inn.

Quest: As opposed to the other acts of devotion above, a quest is almost always imposed on the questor—a sacred task he needs to carry out for his patron Passion. There are no hard and fast rules on how long a quest is—some are completed within a few days, others take an entire lifetime to complete. A quest may include any number of devotional acts, which are awarded separately from the final award for completing the quest. For example, most of the people living in the settlement of Trosk are questors of Jaspree. They have a sacred duty to perform in the name of their patron Passion, which is to find a way to stop the growth of the Badlands.

After helping defeat the bandits, the questor of Garlen speaks with her wounded ward. He explains that he too is a questor of Garlen, but is currently on an urgent quest to deliver a message to King Neden of Throal. Too badly hurt to continue, he implores the character to take his quest on herself, traveling as swiftly as she can to Throal. Recognizing Garlen's need in the man's face, the questor nods, and accepts the sealed letter. Having ensured the wounded questor is settled, she dons her robes and backpack and sets out on the long journey to Throal.

Accumulating Devotion Points

Like Legend Points, all Devotion Point awards a questor earns are cumulative.

If the questor from the previous example had healed the man, brought him to the tavern, and then defended him, a gamemaster might award her 170 points.

The questor need only attempt the act of devotion: he need not necessarily succeed in order to receive the Devotion Point award. What matters is that the questor throws his heart and soul into the act. The Passions ask only that their questors model their behavior on the Passions' ideals. They do not require the behavior to result in victory.

A questor's Devotion Points accumulate to create a Devotion Point total. This total offers a quick way to estimate how many acts of devotion the questor has performed, and so judge the questor's devotion to his chosen Passion. A questor's Devotion Point total also determines the maximum Rank he can have in the Questor talent, as shown on the Devotion Point table. For example, a questor with a Devotion Point total of 500 has a maximum Questor Rank of 4, and a questor who has accumulated at least 2,100 Devotion Points has a maximum Questor Rank of 7.

Failing to Act

Questors must accept every opportunity to act like their patron Passion. If a questor fails to imitate the nature of his patron Passion when he has the chance, he loses Devotion Points. The scale of the ignored opportunity helps the gamemaster to determine how many points the questor loses.

A questor of Garlen that ignores a man in need of healing could lose up to 50 Devotion Points, at the gamemasters discretion. If he passes by a castle that needs to be fortified against an invading force and ignores the inhabitants' pleas for help, he could lose 100 points or more.

DEVOTION POINT TABLE

Devotion Point Total	Maximum Questor Rank
200	2
300	3
500	4
800	5
1,300	6
2,100	7
3,400	8
5,500	9
8,900	10
14,400	11
23,300	12
37,700	13
61,000	14
98,700	15

When the questor loses Devotion Points, the player must subtract these points from the character's Devotion Point total. If the questor's Devotion Point total falls below the number required for his current Questor Rank, the questor loses one Rank in the Questor talent.

A questor with 200 Devotion Points who ignores just one opportunity to perform an act of devotion for his Passion would drop back to Rank 1. A questor with 2,900 Devotion Points, however, could ignore many opportunities, losing as many as 800 Devotion Points before his powers drop to those of Rank 6.

If a questor loses a Rank in his talent, he loses all the Legend Points spent to purchase that Rank. A questor who wants to regain a lost Rank must pay the required number of Legend Points a second time. Every time the questor has an opportunity to imitate his Passion, the gamemaster must tell the questor's player that a test is at hand. If the player chooses to ignore the test, the questor loses the appropriate number of points. If the questor accepts the challenge and fails, he receives the appropriate Devotion Points and suffers no ill effect.

A questor of Garlen knows the Questor talent at Rank 3 and has a Devotion Point total of 300. While traveling through a small village, the questor encounters a wounded man in need of healing. The player asks what would happen if his questor decided to ignore the wounded man; and the gamemaster tells him that he would lose 20 Devotion Points. This would reduce his total to 280 Devotion Points, which is below the minimum required for the Questor talent at Rank 3. His Questor talent Rank would drop to Rank 2, decreasing his powers accordingly. If the questor wanted to repurchase Rank 3 for his Questor talent, he would have to spend the required number of Legend Points again.

Falling Out of Favor

If a Rank 1 questor ignores one opportunity to perform an act of devotion, he falls out of favor with his Passion and loses his questor powers. The character no longer has access to the powers of the Passion. He can only regain these powers by performing a Zealous act of devotion: he cannot accumulate 100 points through a series of Minor and Major acts of devotion—instead, he must seek out danger and put himself at risk to imitate his Passion's ideals.

By performing this act of devotion, whether successful or not, the questor regains the Questor talent at Rank 1, but now has zero Devotion Points. The Devotion Points earned to regain his Questor talent do not accumulate toward a new Devotion Point total. The questor must begin again to accumulate Devotion Points

by performing further acts of devotion, and can then increase his Questor Rank as normal.

Although it is very rare, a fallen questor might choose to follow a different Passion instead. In this case, the restrictions above do not apply. The Mad Passions are known to court questors who have fallen into disgrace with their patron Passion.

Questor Powers

The following list describes the common powers known by questors of the different Passions. Each entry lists the **Passion** granting the power. Questor powers generally add the character's Questor Rank to an Attribute Step to determine the power's **Step** number. Like talents and skills, Questor powers use different types of **Actions** (Standard, Simple, and so on), these are used as explained in the **Player's Guide**. The **Duration** of a power is the length of time it remains in effect once activated. References to "Rank" in the "Duration:" notation are to the character's Questor Rank.

Using Questor Powers

Any questor who possesses and can use Karma is allowed to spend a Karma Point on a Questor Power Test. Unless noted otherwise in the power's description, a questor can attempt to use a questor power a number of times each day equal to his Questor Rank. For this purpose, a day is defined as the period from sunrise to sunrise. Any time a questor uses a power on himself, or invokes a power against another questor for the same Passion, he gains a +3 bonus to his Questor Power Test.

Involuntary Devotion

Optional Rule: Sometimes a character will gain a Passion's favor without knowing it by repeatedly performing acts of devotion important to the Passion. He might unwillingly support a Passion's ideals or even live in a manner befitting a questor of that Passion.

Caedrus, an obsidiman Warrior, has lived through several adventures in which he purposefully initiated attacks on Theran encampments to free their slaves. These repeated acts of devotion may attract, and possibly gain him the favor of, Lochost.

Once a player character unknowingly behaves in a fashion that could attract the attention of a passion, the gamemaster should secretly start keeping track of the Devotion Points the character accumulates. If the character falls out of favor during this time, his Devotion Point total drops to zero. If the character's Devotion Point total continually grows and reaches 200 points, the Passion may choose to bestow a questor power on him in difficult situations.

The character may not be aware which Passion is trying to help him, but he certainly feels that he might succeed in the task at hand. Although the character has no learned knowledge of the Questor talent, he is always considered to possess the Questor talent at Rank 1 for the purpose of determining the effect of the power bestowed on him. Depending on the character's Devotion Point total, however, the gamemaster may decide that the Passion bestows the questor power on the character at a higher equivalent Questor rank, however.

Rokku, an elven Cavalryman, has gained the favor of Dis by behaving in an extremely bureaucratic fashion on many occasions. Rokku likes to suppress other people's will and often bullies others to make them do what he wants. The gamemaster has secretly kept a total of the Devotion Points Rokku would have accumulated if he was a questor: 275 points so far! Rokku has certainly gained the attention of Dis, although his player is not yet aware of that.

During the next game session, Rokku spends some time in the town of Ardanyan, seeking access to the Hall of Records to find the birth certificate of a murdered merchant. The scribe, however, is not willing to let him enter the vaults. He haughtily informs the cavalryman that only the town's council members are allowed inside the Hall. Rokku is furious at the scribe; he desperately needs to find the certificate!

Because Dis is at home in complex bureaucratic hierarchies, the Passion decides to help Rokku and bestows the Enslave power on him. Rokku is not aware of his relationship to the Mad Passion, but gets the strong feeling that, if he gives the right order, the scribe will do what he wants. With a loud voice, Rokku demands that the certificate is brought to him now! *The gamemaster asks Rokku's player to make a Willpower Test against the scribe's Spell Defense. Rokku has no learned knowledge of the Questor talent, but is allowed to use it this one time at Rank 1 for the temporary power bestowed on him by Dis. Filled with the power of the Passion, his test result is a success—suddenly cowed and servile to Rokku's demands, the scribe hurries to fetch the certificate for him.*

Over time, the character might learn of his relationship with his patron Passion. Until he makes a decision to become a questor, and learns the Questor talent, he can only use the questor powers his Passion allows.

Rokku stands in line to get a mug of ale at the local tavern. He has had a long day and is feeling more than a little impatient at the moment. Recalling what happened with the scribe at the Hall of Records, and the empowerment he felt at the time, he loudly demands to be served now! *This time Dis is not interested. Nothing happens, except that the folks at the tavern shake their heads at the snooty elf. Rokku, feeling somewhat embarrassed, takes his place in the queue and tries to avoid the eyes of the people staring at him.*

Absorb Damage

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Thystonius

The Absorb Damage power allows a questor to add the armor of inspiration to a target character. The questor talks to the character for 3 rounds, attempting to inspire him by vividly describing the thrill of taking physical risks, then makes an Absorb Damage Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target adds the questor's Absorb Damage Rank to his Physical Armor. In addition to this effect, increase the result level required to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit against the target's Physical Armor by one level (from Excellent to Extraordinary, for example).

Animate Plant

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Duration: Special (see text) **Passion**: Jaspree

The Animate Plant power allows a questor to control a plant or tree, commanding it to do his bidding. The questor focuses his attention on a single plant or tree and makes an Animate Plant Test. The power summons a wood spirit which animates the plant for a number of minutes equal to the test result. The wood spirit has a maximum Strength Rating equal to the questor's Questor Rank. The wood spirit grants the questor one service, which it attempts to carry out to the best of its ability. While under the effect of this power, the plant or tree can uproot itself and use its leaves, branches, and roots as limbs to move, grasp objects, or even fight. When the power's duration expires, the plant or tree takes root again where it is currently standing. If circumstances prevent it from taking root, the plant or tree falls down instead and will soon die unless replanted.

Break Shackles

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Duration: 1 round **Passion**: Lochost

The Break Shackles power allows an imprisoned questor to snap chains, open locks, burst ropes, and break free of other bonds preventing him personally from escaping captivity. This power works by destroying a portion of the rope, wood, or metal, keeping the questor imprisoned. The target of the power must be wrapped around, or able to grasped, by the questor. For example, the Break Shackles power can be used against ropes restraining the questor, or a padlock securing his cell door. It cannot be used against an internal lock mechanism, built into a door or recessed into a wall section, as this cannot be held by the questor. The questor meditates for 3 rounds. Once he completes his meditation without interruption, he makes a Break Shackles Test against the higher of the Spell Defense of the material used to prevent his escape or a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test succeeds, the binding material—lock, chain, rope, or whatever—begins to stretch and weaken, then finally breaks or shatters, freeing the questor.

Cause Pain

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Raggok

The Cause Pain power allows a questor to inflict horrible, physical pain on a target character with the sound of his voice. The questor speaks to the character for 3 rounds, then makes a Cause Pain Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the questor's voice, enhanced by Raggok's foul strength, wracks the target with excruciating pain. While under the effect of the Cause Pain power, the character feels as though someone or something is repeatedly driving countless sharp needles into his flesh, even though he can see no physical source that might cause such pain. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Cause Pain Step to suppress the pain. If the test succeeds, he works past the worst of the pain and can act that round, although he is considered Harried when doing so. If the test fails, the target is overcome by the pain, doubled-over and screaming in agony, and cannot perform any actions that round; he is considered Knocked Down while so immobilized.

Like the Pain spell, p.345, the Cause Pain power has no effect on creatures that neither feel pain, or are otherwise inured against or used to it. This includes undead, most Horrors or Horror constructs, and blood elves. Unlike the Pain spell, the questor need not concentrate to maintain the power's effect; he is free to act normally after he has invoked this power against a target.

Change Thoughts

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Lochost

The Change Thoughts power allows a questor to encourage a target character to contemplate and act on new ideas. The questor makes a Change Thoughts Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the questor adds his Questor Rank as a bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes to influence the target character's thinking. The questor may attempt a number of Interaction Tests so enhanced equal to his Questor Rank, and no more than one test so enhanced per hour. Additionally, if the questor fails two consecutive Interaction Tests when influencing the target, then the character becomes aware that something is wrong and the power's effect ends.

Command Animal

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Special (see text) **Passion**: Jaspree

The Command Animal power allows a questor to give verbal instructions to a target animal. The instructions must be given verbally to the animal in a single, simple sentence. The questor makes a Command Animal Test against the animal's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the animal will carry out the questor's instructions to the best of its ability for a number of minutes equal to the Command Animal Test result. Although the animal is able to understand the instructions, the Command Animal power does not allow the animal to communicate with the questor in return.

Comfort

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank minutes **Passion**: Garlen

The Comfort power allows a questor to dispel dark thoughts and emotions, both natural and magical. The power also counteracts emotional manipulation that produces fear or agitation; it can rally people who want to flee, or restore the spirits of people who believe they have nothing to live for. The questor makes a Comfort Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, those affected by the power immediately become calm, allowing them to make decisions from a level-headed, emotionally sound point of view. Any effect affecting the character that inspires fear or terror in its victims (such as the Frighten talent or the Death's Head spell, for example) ends immediately for that character.

CONFUSION

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Dis

The Confusion power allows a questor to confuse a group of people, making it difficult for them to focus on the task at hand. The questor makes a Confusion Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, those affected by the power become confused. Each round, a confused character may make a Willpower Test against the Confusion Step. If the test fails, the character remains confused and unable to take actions that round; he stands and looks around, trying to understand what is going on. If the test succeeds, the Confusion power does not affect him that round, and he can act normally. A character that makes a successful Willpower Test on the first round after the power is used against him, escapes the ongoing effect of the power; he need not make any further Willpower Tests, and may act normally.

CREATE STRUCTURE

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Upandal

The Create Structure power allows a questor to create a temporary bridge or tower. The questor meditates for 3 rounds, then makes a Create Structure (8) Test. If the test succeeds, the questor generates a number of Structure Points equal to the Create Structure Test result.

Each Structure Point creates up to 2 horizontal yards of bridge or 2 vertical yards of tower. The questor can use these Structure Points as he likes, making the bridge or tower longer or shorter, as desired. Regardless of their length or height, bridges created by this power are always no more than 10 yards wide and towers no greater than 10 yards in diameter. Each structure has a Physical Armor rating of 15 and a Damage Rating of 50 (see **Barriers and Structures** in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***). Unused Structure Points add +2 to the Physical Armor or +5 to the Damage Rating of the bridge or tower. For example, a questor makes a Create Structure Test with a result of 18. This gives him 18 Structure Points to use to build his bridge or tower. The questor spends 8 Structure Points to create a tower 16 yards high and 10 yards in diameter. The remaining 10 Structure Points are used to increase the tower's Physical Armor to 25 and its Damage Rating to 75.

Bridges created using this power are constructed from gray stones, with low stone railings on either side. They can span any type of obstacle, including rivers, chasms, and pits. If the questor's Create Structure Test fails to generate sufficient Structure Points to create a bridge long enough to span the complete distance, nothing appears. Towers created using this power are also made of gray stone. A floor appears in the tower for every 6 yards of height, connected by a spiral staircase that winds up through the interior wall of the tower, passing through each floor. A door on the first floor provides access to the tower, and each floor has two windows.

The questor may dispel his own structure at any time by making a successful Willpower Test against the Create Structure Test result. Otherwise, the bridge or tower remains in place for the entire duration of the power.

CREATE WEAPON

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Upandal

The Create Weapon power allows a questor to fashion a weapon of any type—a melee, missile, or throwing weapon—from sheer will. The questor meditates for 3 rounds, then makes a Create Weapon Test against the Damage Step of the type of weapon he is trying to create. If the test succeeds, the weapon materializes at the questor's feet, in case of missile weapons with one standard container of ammunition. At the end of the power's duration, the weapon (and excess ammunition) vanishes.

DECEIT

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Vestrial

The Deceit power allows a questor to make a target character more susceptible to a lie. The questor makes a Deceit Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the questor adds his Questor Rank as a bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes when lying to the target character. The questor may attempt a maximum number of Interaction Tests such enhanced equal to his Questor Rank, and no more than one test so enhanced per hour Additionally, if the questor fails two consecutive Interaction Tests when lying to the target, then the character becomes aware that something is wrong and the effect of the power ends.

DISCOVER DESIRE

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Duration: 1 round **Passion**: Vestrial

The Discover Desire power allows a questor to learn a target character's strongest desires. The questor makes a Discover Desire Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster tells the questor's player the target's greatest desires at the moment, up to a maximum number equal to the questor's Questor Rank. Not all desires hold equal importance; the gamemaster should list them in order of importance.

EASE SUFFERING

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Mynbruje

The Ease Suffering power allows a questor to ease emotional and physical suffering. The power cannot heal or permanently remove damage, but it stops pain. The Ease Suffering power is useful against the pain of Wounds taken during battle, emotional terror caused by Horrors, and emotional attacks such as fear spells. The questor spends 3 rounds speaking to those whose suffering he wishes to ease, then makes an Ease Suffering Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, those characters affected by the Ease Suffering power feel comforted and stop feeling any pain. Characters don't suffer any negative effects from Wounds while under the effect of this power except for penalties to Recovery Tests. Any magical effect that induces pain in its victims, such as the Cause Pain questor power or the Pain spell, ends immediately for characters comforted by the Ease Suffering power.

ENCHANTED GIFT

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank days **Passion**: Astendar

The Enchanted Gift power allows a questor to create a gift of a work of art that will evoke a specific, basic emotion in the gift's recipient. Questors usually use this power to influence a target to feel a certain emotion toward a third party. The gift may represent any art form, including songs, paintings, poems, and so on, as dictated by the questor's talents and skills. The recipient (the target of the power) must accept the gift willingly, whether or not he knows of the gift's magical charm. For example, a questor could not simply sing a song powered by Enchanted Gift while in the target

character's presence and have it affect the target. The singer would have to ask, "Might I give you the gift of a song?" Once the target accepts the gift, the questor power leaves the gift and affects the recipient and the object or verse is no longer magical. The beauty of the gift may make it inherently valuable, however.

The questor enchants the gift with a basic emotion, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, or joy. The emotion must be directed at a specific subject, such as a ruler, the young woman down the street, a nearby citadel, and so on. The recipient of the gift feels the designated emotion for the specific subject. For example, if a small statue enchanted with love for a specific girl is given to her unmarried neighbor, he falls in love with the girl. As soon as the character accepts the gift, the questor makes an Enchanted Gift Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target becomes more receptive to suggestions involving the emotion and subject enchanted into the gift. Characters add the questor's Questor Rank as a bonus to all Interaction Tests in which they make a positive suggestion related to the emotion and subject of the enchanted gift. Interaction Tests suggesting thoughts and ideas opposed to the gift's emotion and subject incur a penalty equal to the questor's Questor Rank.

Nedra, a Rank 5 questor of Astendar, must leave her native village. Worried that the local warrior, who fancies himself in love with her, will abandon his task of protecting the village to follow her, she has created a cloak brooch in the shape of a shield as a parting gift. Using her Enchanted Gift power, she enchants the brooch with the basic emotion of joy and directs that emotion toward the village. She presents the brooch to the warrior as a farewell gift, which he accepts. Nedra makes a successful Enchanted Gift Test against the warrior's Social Defense of 9. For the next five days, anyone attempting to convince the warrior to stay in his now-beloved village gains a +5 bonus to his Interaction Test. Anyone encouraging the warrior to leave his precious village and follow his one true love suffers a –5 penalty to his Interaction Test.

Note that an enchanted gift can be offered by anyone to anyone else. For example, a child might pick up an enchanted statuette from a questor's workbench and offer it to his mother. If the mother accepts the gift, the gamemaster must ask the questor's player to make an Enchanted Gift Test against the mother's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the gift's power affects the mother, whether or not the questor knows that the gift was given, or if it was meant for the mother.

Encourage Trade

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank minutes **Passion**: Chorrolis

The Encourage Trade power allows a questor to persuade other people to negotiate with him. For example, this power would help a questor who wants to buy a sword from a warrior who refuses to part with his favorite blade, or who needs to generate some quick cash from a wealthy miser who usually refuses to spend money on anything but food, or who needs to convince someone who has no intention of leaving home to journey with him as a bodyguard. The questor makes an Encourage Trade Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the targets are willing to negotiate while under the power's influence, although they may not easily part with whatever the questor wants. Negotiations usually begin at 150 to 200 percent of the actual value of the object or service. Both questor and targets can use talents and skills such as Haggle to affect the price in their favor. If the questor fails to achieve his goal, the affected characters wander away, wondering what possessed them to consider selling their prized possessions.

Enslave

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Dis

The Enslave power allows a questor to issue a command that must be obeyed. The target characters must belong to one of the Namegiver races, but do not have to understand the language used by the questor. The questor makes an Enslave Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the questor may command those affected, who must obey him. The command must be phrased as a single, simple sentence. For example, "Find the knife and bring it here," or "Attack your friends," represent valid commands. A command such as "Kill them!" is too vague, though "Kill everyone" would be understood and obeyed. Those affected will attempt to carry out the questor's command as long as they remain under the influence of the power. Questors can use the Enslave power to make people do things they would not normally do, even harm loved ones. If the questor commands a target to directly harm himself, however, he must achieve a Good result with a Charisma Test against the target's Social Defense to convince the character to do so. If this test fails, the command has no effect on the target.

Fortify Structure

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Special (see text) **Passion**: Upandal

The Fortify Structure power allows a questor to fortify the walls of any structure built by Namegivers, including ships, castles, bridges, and so on. To use this power, the questor meditates for 3 rounds, then makes a Fortify Structure Test. The structure is reinforced for a number of minutes equal to the Fortify Structure Test result. Each of the questor's Questor Ranks adds +2 to the Physical Armor or +5 to the Damage Rating of the structure. While the power is in effect, the result level required to defeat the structure's Physical Armor is increased by one level (from Excellent to Extraordinary, for example).

Heal

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: 1 round **Passion**: Garlen

The Heal power allows a questor to heal any damage a target character may have taken. The questor spends 3 rounds examining the character's injuries, then makes a Heal Test. The target immediately recovers a number of Damage Points equal to the Heal Test result. Alternatively, the questor can heal the character of a single Wound by making a successful Heal Test against the target's Wound Threshold. The questor may only use this power once on the same person each day.

Incite Greed

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Chorrolis

The Incite Greed power allows a questor describing a scheme or offer to intensify the natural greediness of his listeners. An overwhelming desire to get a piece of the action makes the targets of this power susceptible to bad risks, as long as a potential

for profit exists. The questor makes an Incite Greed Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, a character who suggests schemes for acquiring money to someone under the influence of the Incite Greed power adds the questor's Questor Rank as a bonus to his Interaction Test. Conversely, a character trying to point out the folly of scrambling after money subtracts the questor's Questor Rank as a penalty to his Interaction Test. The questor can make additional Incite Greed Tests to make more and more people succumb to their greedy impulses. As soon as he fails one test, his audience realizes that they have been considering ideas that contradict their own sense of proportion of risk versus wealth, and wander away from the questor.

The effect of the Incite Greed power lasts for a number of hours equal to the questor's Questor Rank. This may place the affected characters in an unfavorable situation when the effects of the power wear off—they may find themselves halfway to the destination of a wild goose chase, or involved in a particularly nasty transaction. They might decide to honor the promises they made while under the influence of the power, or reject agreements as being made under false pretences.

INCREASEMENT TABLE

Questor Rank	Bonus
1–3	+1
4–6	+2
7–9	+3
10–12	+4
13–15	+5

Increase Initiative

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Thystonius

The Increase Initiative power allows a questor to increase a target character's Initiative Step. The questor speaks inspirational words to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Initiative Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +1 bonus to his Initiative Tests for every 3 Questor Ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increasement Table.

Increase Perception

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Mynbruje

The Increase Perception power allows a questor to increase a target character's Perception Step, also improving the target's Perception-based abilities, talents, and skills. The questor speaks inspirational words to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Perception Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +1 bonus to his Perception Tests for every 3 Questor Ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increasement Table.

Increase Speed

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Floranuus

The Increase Speed power allows a questor to improve the Movement rate of one person or animal, including the questor. The questor speaks inspirational words to the target for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Speed Test. The target may add a maximum number of hexes (twice this in yards) equal to the Questor Rank to his Movement Rate; this increase is not double when Running.

Increase Stamina

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Floranuus

The Increase Stamina power allows a questor to encourage and inspire companions to continue on and endure physical hardship. The Increase Stamina power increases a target character's Toughness Step, also improving the target's Toughness-based abilities, talents and skills. The questor speaks inspirational words to the target group for 3 rounds, encouraging his listeners to live like Floranuus and revel in motion, then makes an Increase Stamina Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, all those affected gain a +1 bonus to their Toughness-based Tests for every 3 Questor Ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increasement Table.

Increase Strength

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Thystonius

The Increase Strength power allows a questor to increase a target character's Strength Step, also improving the target's Strength-based abilities, talents and skills, including Damage Tests. The questor speaks inspirational words to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Strength Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +1 bonus to his Strength-based Tests for every 3 Questor Ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increasement Table.

Inspire Rage

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank rounds **Passion**: Raggok

The Inspire Rage power allows a questor to send a target character into a blind, violent rage. The questor speaks insidious words of evil to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Inspire Rage Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the power fills the target's mind with a desperate need to cause carnage. The target attacks whatever animal or person is closest to him, fighting to the death. The creature he attacks may have been a friend moments earlier, but Raggok's rage blocks this from the target's mind. As soon as he kills this creature, the target attacks the next nearest animal or Namegiver, repeatedly seeking new victims for his rage until he is killed or the effect of the power wears off. Victims of this power will generally use the Aggressive Attack combat option (p.403) on all of their attacks.

Inspire Rebellion

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank minutes **Passion**: Lochost

The Inspire Rebellion power allows a questor to attempt to foster rebellion among the downtrodden and enslaved. The questor spends 3 rounds talking to those he wishes to inspire of Lochost's desire for them to be free, then makes an Inspire Rebellion Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the former slaves gain a +1 bonus to any Action Tests that help them gain freedom for every 3 Ranks of the questor's Questor Rank, as shown in the Inspire Rebellion Table.

Instill Love

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Sustained
Duration: Rank days
Passion: Astendar

The Instill Love power allows a questor to make a target character romantically inclined toward him. The questor spends 3 rounds flirting or speaking in a friendly and encouraging manner with the character, then makes an Instill Love Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's Attitude towards the questor improves by a number of degrees according to the Instill Love Table (see the **Gamemastering** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Compendium***). For example, if a questor achieves a Good result against a Neutral character, the character's Attitude is increased by 1 degree to Loyal. The target affected by the Instill Love power may feel anything from puppy love to intense lust. The questor's attitude toward the target and the gamemaster's discretion determine how the target reacts to the Instill Love power. If the questor treats the target as someone to be dealt with patiently, then the target might show only puppy love, afraid of being rejected if he makes his true feelings known. If the questor openly invites physical attention, then the target might arrange to always be near the questor, holding his hand and suggesting they slip off alone.

INSTILL LOVE TABLE

Result Level	Attitude Improvement
Average	1 degree
Good	2 degrees
Excellent	3 degrees
Extraordinary	4 degrees

If the gamemaster chooses to rely less on roleplaying, he may assign a degree or type of love to each result level and determine the target's feelings that way. The gamemaster should feel free to add complications to this budding relationship. Love is tricky, and Astendar's questors well know that when they dabble with romance, they often invite more than they bargained for.

Living Death

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Standard
Duration: Rank hours
Passion: Dis

The Living Death power allows a questor to force others to perform a task tirelessly for hours on end. The questor makes a Living Death Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the questor gives a one word command such as "fight," "march," "dig," "row," and so on, to the group. Those affected by the power must carry out the command tirelessly for the duration of the power. Only when the power ends or if the questor commands them to stop, can the affected group cease their endless activity. Those targeted by this power are simply compelled to obey someone else. They are not mindless in their response. If commanded to fight, they may choose their opponents; if commanded to dig, they can choose their ground. Because of this, the questor may use any means at his disposal to direct the efforts of those under the influence of the Living Death power. For example, armed guards might confine people commanded to dig only to work in a certain area.

Though targets of the Living Death power suffer no ill effects while performing what they have been commanded to do, they may suffer terrible damage from overexertion, fighting, and so on, once the questor ceases to influence them. When the power's duration expires, each person affected makes a Damage Test with a Step Number equal to the number of hours he was under the effect of the power. The character takes Wounds and other damage normally. No armor protects against this damage.

Locate Valuables

Step: Rank+ Perception
Action: Standard
Duration: Rank minutes
Passion: Chorrolis

The Locate Valuables power allows a questor to sense the location of the single most valuable deposit of treasure nearby. The questor makes a Locate Valuables Test. The range of the power is equal to the test result×30 yards. As soon as the questor chooses to use this power, the gamemaster tells the questor's player in which direction the greatest source of wealth lies. The gamemaster may give directions such as "North," or "Toward the sun," but should not indicate the precise distance between the questor and the treasure.

The Locate Valuables power focuses the questor on one treasure only; he will not notice a larger treasure even if it comes into range as he moves toward the first treasure found. For the duration of the power, the questor is guided toward the treasure he first sensed. If he travels until the duration of the power ends and fails to find the treasure, then immediately uses the power again, he will sense the most valuable treasure within range of his current location, not necessarily the original treasure. If the questor is determined to reach the first treasure, he must move out of range of the second treasure and use the power again to locate the first treasure. Chorrolis is always distracted by the largest wealth he senses, and so sometimes has trouble keeping his mind on the task at hand. What determines the most valuable treasure is defined in terms of the cash value the questor would expect to receive for acquiring the treasure. For example, a chest containing 100 silver pieces is obviously more valuable than a chest containing 1 gold piece, but a feather that the questor could sell to a collector of rare feathers for 1,000 silver pieces would be the most valuable treasure of all.

Manipulate Desire

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Standard
Duration: Rank hours
Passion: Vestrial

The Manipulate Desire power allows a questor to influence the desire of one person. The questor makes a Manipulate Desire Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he firmly plants in the target's mind one item, person, or goal that becomes the target's consuming desire for the duration of the power. Add the questor's Questor Rank as a bonus to all Interaction Tests made against the target that suggest acquiring or keeping the planted desire. Conversely, subtract the questor's Questor Rank as a penalty from all Interaction Tests made against the target that suggest ignoring or abandoning that same desire.

Perceive Emotion

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Standard
Duration: Rank minutes
Passion: Mynbruje

The Perceive Emotion power allows a questor to detect a person's strongest emotion and the focus of that emotion. The questor makes a Perceive Emotion Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster informs the questor's player of the strongest emotion felt by the target from moment to moment while the power is in effect. The gamemaster also tells the player the target of that emotion. The questor may learn specific information about the target's emotions by asking leading questions.

Rabine, a Rank 5 questor of Mynbruje, seeks to discover if a Warrior murdered a young boy. The questor makes a successful Perceive Emotion Test against the Warrior, and casually asks him if he has ever been forced to kill children in his work.

The gamemaster tells the questor that the Warrior replies, "No. Never." The gamemaster adds that the Warrior feels afraid of the questor. The questor then mentions that the corpse of a boy was recently unearthed in a nearby ravine. The gamemaster informs the questor's player that the Warrior is now feeling hatred, directed toward a boy. Because the questor chose his conversation carefully to avoid alerting the warrior, five minutes have passed and the power wears off. Did the Warrior kill the boy? Perhaps not, but he is definitely a suspect.

Plant Growth

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Duration: Permanent **Passion**: Jaspree

The Plant Growth power allows a questor to make plants grow at an unnatural rate. While this power is particularly useful for farmers, questors can also use it to quickly create a wall of plant life as sturdy as a fortress wall. The questor makes a Plant Growth Test. The area of plant life affected is equal to the test result×10 square yards (test result×5 hexes), and the plants grow into the desired shape in a matter of minutes. To determine the abundance of growth the power produces, the gamemaster determines which of three broad categories best describes the environment in which the questor is using the power: Sparse Plant Life or Rocky Terrain, Light Foliage or Well-tended Farmlands, or Thick Vegetation or Forests. Each type has a growth multiplier, as shown in the Plant Growth Table. This number, multiplied by the questor's Questor Rank, represents the enhanced foliage's Physical Armor. The Damage Rating of the foliage is equal to the Physical Armor multiplied by the growth multiplier. For example, if a Rank 3 questor uses the Plant Growth power in the jungle, which has a growth multiplier of ×3, the vegetation grows to a thickness that serves as a barrier with Physical Armor of 9 and a Damage Rating of 27 (see **Barriers and Structures** in the ***Gamemaster's Compendium***).

Farmland affected by the Plant Growth power does not serve as a barrier or instantly enhance growth. Instead, it produces an extra yield for every 3 Ranks of the questor's Questor Rank. For example, if a Rank 6 questor uses the Plant Growth power on a piece of farmland, it would produce two extra yields in the coming harvest.

PLANT GROWTH TABLE

Environment	Growth Multiplier
Sparse Plant Life or Rocky Terrain	×1
Light Foliage or Well-tended Farmlands	×2
Thick Vegetation or Forests	×3

Raise Undead

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Raggok

The Raise Undead power allows a questor to place an undead spirit into a corpse, resulting in the creation of a cadaver man. The questor touches a portion of the deceased body and makes a Raise Undead Test against its Spell Defense as if the target was alive. If the test succeeds, the corpse is raised from the dead as a cadaver man under the questor's control. The questor can control the undead target verbally. The cadaver man always attempts to carry out the questor's instructions to the best of its ability.

Return Youthful Spirit

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Rank minutes **Passion**: Astendar

The Return Youthful Spirit power allows a questor to draw on the vibrant energy of youthful passion in the darkest of times, finding the strength and personal fortitude to speak words of comfort and inspiration to those suffering injuries, and revive hope for a better future. The questor speaks inspirational words for 3 rounds, then makes a Return Youthful Spirit Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the questor distracts his companions from the grim reality of their present situation by painting a vivid verbal picture of a fantastic world where everything is possible and nothing can stand in their way. While affected by the power, characters ignore their injuries. They ignore the effects of Wounds and do not pass out when their Current Damage equals or exceeds their Unconsciousness Rating. Pain does not affect them. If they continue in battle they can take further damage and might even die, but their passions will carry them forward and they will neither feel pain nor drop unconscious until Death takes them.

Seal Home

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Duration: Rank hours **Passion**: Garlen

The Seal Home power allows a questor to seal windows and doors with a mystic force that hinders the entry of intruders. The questor must be inside the structure to use this power. He can seal a maximum number of doors and windows equal to his Questor Rank. The Seal Home power can be used to block any size opening, and works as well on openings physically blocked by windows or doors as on holes in walls. The questor makes a Seal Home Test and adds the test result to the Death Rating of those windows, doors, and other openings the questor designates as sealed (see **Barriers and Structures** in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***). Questors may use this power multiple times on the same openings. In this case, the effects stack, further increasing the Damage Rating of the barrier and the result level required for Armor-Defeating Hits (result levels increased above Extraordinary mean it is impossible to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit against the barrier).

Speed Ship

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Duration: Special (see text) **Passion**: Floranuus

The Speed Ship power allows a questor to increase the speed of a waterborne or aerial vessel, allowing it to travel faster and more smoothly. The questor can influence airships, riverboats, and watergoing vessels, including those whose power is assisted by sailors using oars. He cannot influence a horse-drawn wagon, however, because the movement of the wagon depends entirely on the animals pulling it. The questor concentrates on the ship for a ship combat turn, at the end of which he makes a Speed Ship Test, the result of which determines the duration of the power in hours. While the power is in effect, the questor distributes a number of Steps equal to half his Questor Rank (rounded up) among the target ship's Speed and Maneuverability Steps. For example, a Rank 7 questor of Floranuus can add +2 to an airship's Speed and Maneuverability Steps, or +4 to Speed or Maneuverability, or +3 to one and +1 to the other.

TALENT KNACKS MASTER TABLE

Talent	Knack(s)	Rank	Strain
Air Sailing	Air Legs	4	2
	Assault	8	4
	Boarding Action	8	4
	Swab the Deck	9	1
Air Speaking	Far Speaking	7	2
	Whispered Conversation	7	1
Arcane Mutterings	Arcane Curses	7	1
Astral Sight	Diagnose	5	2
	Lift the Curtain	9	1*
Avoid Blow	Bounce	9	2
Bank Shot	Backbiter	7	3
Blood Share	Wound Share	8	4
Bone Compass	Blood Compass	9	3
	Nether Sextant	12	3
Book Memory	Remember Conversation	9	2
	Photographic Memory	10	3
Borrow Sense	Share Sense	7	2
Claw Shape	Claw Tool	4	2*
Climbing	Swinging Move	5	0+ **
	By the Fingernails	7	4
Cold Purify	Halt Disease	6	2
Creature Analysis	Creature Remains	7	2
	Horror Analysis	9	1
Dead Fall	Deathbed	7	1*
Detect Falsehood	Liar	8	1
Diplomacy	Poisoned Influence	6	1
Disguise Self	Angelic Appearance	7	1
Elementalism	Weave Element	5	2
	Create Orichalcum	11	2
Emotion Song	Telling the Tale	5	0
Empathic Sense	Disassociate	9	2
False Sight	Lasting Deceit	12	6
Fire Heal	Wound Heal	6	2 **
	Heal Others	7	1+ **
	Cosmetics	9	2 **
Fireblood	Flaming Wounds	8	3
Flame Arrow	Fire Arrow	5	1
	Explosive Flame Arrow	8	4
	Spirit Flame	9	4
Forge Armor	Smooth Armor	9	4
Forge Weapon	Forge Arrow	5	2
Great Leap	Flying Kick	7	2
Haggle	Covet Item	7	4
	Faulty Goods	9	2
Hold Thread	Hold Multiple Threads	10	2+ **
Impressive Shot	Arrow Stop	7	2
Incite Mob	Defuse Mob	8	2
Incite Stampede	Calm Herd	8	2
Lifesight	Deathsight	9	3
Long Shot	Extend Range	10	3
Maneuver	Setup	8	1
Melee Weapons	Improvised Weapons	7	1
	Deflect Blow	8	1
	Armor Beater	10	3
Mimic Voice	Mimic Music	8	2
Mind Wave	Mind Trick	9	1
Missile Weapons	Placed Shot	7	2 ***
Momentum Attack	Weapon Smash	9	2
Orbiting Spy	Orbiting Watcher	8	1
	Astral Spy	9	1+ **
Parry	Arrow Cutting	9	2
Picking Pockets	Offguard	7	4
Resist Taunt	Rapier Wit	9	2
Riposte	Claw Riposte	9	3
Second Chance	Bless Ally	12	4
Second Weapon	Second Riposte	9	4
Silent Walk	Shadow Hide	4	1
	Traceless Stride	8	1

* per minute
** (see text)
*** (per attack)

TALENT KNACKS MASTER TABLE

Talent	Knack(s)	Rank	Strain
Spellcasting	Signature Spells	7	1
	Anchored Spell	8	1 Blood Wound **
	Maintain Spell Threads	8	1+ **
	Name Spell	8	1+ **
	Gaping Wounds	9	2
	Spell Stacking	10	2+ **
Spirit Mount	Favored Mount	4	2 **
	Water Mount	11	4
	Air Mount	13	6
Spirit Talk	Translator	9	1*
Steely Stare	Hard Glare	10	4
Summon	Bind Spirit	6	2
	Mold Spirit	11	2
Temperature	Air Conditioning	6	2
Thread Weaving	Braiding Threads	7	2
	Thread Masking	7	2
	Unraveling	7	2+ **
	Talent Linking	8	2+ **
	Talent Pattern	13	2
	Attribute Pattern	15	2
Thread Weaving (magicians)	Create Spell Matrix Object	5	2
	Create Enhanced Matrix Object	8	2
	Create Armored Matrix Object	12	2
	Create Shared Matrix Object	15	2
Thread Weaving (magicians), Thread Smithing	Create Common Magic Item	5	2
	Create Thread Item	7	2
Thread Weaving	Ghost Master Ritual	7	0
Throwing Weapons	Improvised Missiles	7	1
	Placed Throw	7	2***
	Pin Up	8	2
Tracking	Adept's Best Friend	6	3
	Animal's Best Friend	6	4
	Identify Tracks	7	2
	Astral Tracking	9	2
Trick Riding	Swift Hoof	5	1**
	Feinting Retreat	7	3
	Feinting Lunge	8	3
	Mountain Hoof	8	2 per round **
Unarmed Combat	Head Butt	7	2
	Pin Down	7	2
	Mighty Throw	8	2
Warp Missile	Faulty Bowyer	9	4
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* per minute
** (see text)
*** (per attack)

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